

The Brown Sugar Press

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

FROM THE EDITOR	2
BOOK REVIEW	3
MEMBER PROFILE	4
QUILTER PROFILE	5
SPECIAL HOUSTON SECTION	8
UPCOMING EVENTS	13

Message from the President



Hello Brown Sugars!

As one of the founding members of the Brown Sugar Stitchers Quilt Guild who followed the vision of Nancy Franklin and Jocelyn Carter, I have had the pleasure of witnessing firsthand the growth of our guild. When the guild was formed, most of us were beginners. Over the years, we planted little seeds of four patches and nine patches, graduated to triangles, and got advanced degrees in art quilting. Many members have nurtured and grown their skills to the point that they can accurately be called professional quilters.

Now it is time for us to harvest those skills for the benefit of our membership. I have compiled a list of Quilt Subject Matter Experts (QSME's). The list contains the names of guild members who are extremely knowledgeable in one particular area of quilting. The list is not exhaustive, but I hope it can be the beginning of an internal reference that you can use when you have quilting questions. Why research in a book when you can get personal tutoring up close and personal? The QSME's will also be called upon from time to time to make presentations in guild meetings in order to share their knowledge with all. I thank all of our QSME's in advance for their willingness to share.

We are 61 members strong now and growing each month in numbers and expertise. We are very fortunate to have such a wonderful and bountiful harvest in our guild, and it is this resource of skills and expertise that is the most under-appreciated benefit of guild membership. Make sure you take advantage of the harvest as we continue to make this year the best ever!

O.V.

The Brown Sugar Press

FROM THE EDITOR

Well, the election is over and we have made history in this country by electing our first Black president of these United States of America! Let's make the Obama family honorary members of our guild and wrap them with warmth and support as they embark on their adventure as the first Black First Family!

This month we go to spend time with the children at the Carrie Steele Pitts orphanage where we have been donating quilts to help wrap them with warmth and support for a number of years. I hope that we all know that it's a wonderful thing we are doing and appreciate our guild's contributions not only to Carrie Steele, but others.

In our newsletter this month, enjoy the regular profile features, a funny article from Nina about sewing rooms and a special section of reports and some photos from the 34th International Quilt Show and Festival held in Houston, TX. Visit our private yahoo group to view some of the pictures of quilts and other activities at the show. These can be found in the album labeled Houston 2008.

Please remember to return those profiles to me for the newsletter. Don't forget as you gather with friends and family on Thanksgiving Day to give thanks for all the great things that have happened to you and even those that haven't yet. Give thanks for belonging to a great guild of giving sisters; give thanks for the ability to be able to give so much to others through the great art and craft of quilting.

Myla

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Endangered



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BOOK REVIEW

Quilts from the Selvage Edge by Karen Griska

(Published by the American Quilters Society, 2008)

by Sharon Gipson Allen (skgipson@bellsouth.net)

The 'edgy' forward by Mark Lipinski of Quilters Home magazine sets a refreshing tone for the book, Quilts from the Selvage Edge by Karen Griska. Karen continues this tone with ideas, inspiration, and instructions that just might push the quilt police 'over the edge'!

Like most quilters, I was taught to avoid selvages at all costs. Selvages, which are woven tighter than the rest of the fabric, simply do not lie right. Plus, they frequently have writing and other information on them that doesn't 'go' with my projects. According to conventional wisdom, you should cut around the selvages toss them right into the trash.

In Quilts from the Selvage Edge, the author tosses this bit of conventional wisdom right into the trash. She explains how to use selvages as the main fabrics in our quilts, and the results are striking. Her book is chock full of great ideas, and grants permission for quilters to use what would normally be discarded to create eye-catching designs. I am sure that this technique is equally adaptable to traditional quilts, art quilts, quilted accessories and wearables.

The author explains what selvages are and she tells the readers what the dots, marks and words found on the selvages mean. Then she gives the readers directions on how to cut pieces from the selvage edges of fabrics, and she provides instructions for foundation piecing the selvages so that they can be used in quilts. The next part of the book contains pictures, patterns, and instructions to inspire readers. The patterns include the old maid's puzzle, tumbling blocks, basket weave and tree of life. These traditional favorites are given a fresh interpretation through the use of selvages. Finally, the author shares tips for finishing selvage quilts and she invites readers to upload photos of their handiwork to her website.

By using the technique in Quilts from the Selvage Edge, it is possible to use fabric from your stash to create a quilt that does not resemble anything in your fabric collection. Plus, your new quilt can be virtually cost free since you can make it using material you already own. I enjoyed this book. It was a fast read, with easy instructions, great photos, fun projects and a healthy dose of inspiration.

I purchased my copy of the book at ConnectingThreads.com for 40% off the \$19.95 cover price, plus shipping.



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MEMBER PROFILE:

INEZ WILKERSON

Your name and place of birth – Inez Wilkerson—Rochester , New York

How long you've lived in the Atlanta area– since 1979 with a few years off to follow my husband to California for army service

What you do for a living and other hobbies and interests - I am a para- professional with kindergarten in a DeKalb County school I read a lot and love high school football

Quilting history: I am mostly self-taught with a lot of help from Anita, Aisha, books and magazines. My mother hand-quilted. I have been quilting for about 3 years though my intent to quilt was formed when I was 15. I am a master of procrastination!

Do you prefer hand or machine piecing and quilting? It depends on the size of the project. I enjoy hand quilting if I am not under time constraints. I mostly have done traditional baby quilts with non-traditional colors and motifs. I did complete one queen-sized quilt that I both hand and machine pieced and quilted by hand because it was too big to fit my machine and I could not afford to send it off. I guess that makes me traditional. I haven't entered any juried shows.

How long have you been a member of BSS? Have you served in any officer or committee chair positions in the guild? 3 years. This is my second term as Hospitality chair.

Who do you admire most as far as well-known or professional quilters? Aisha Lumumba—all of her quilts radiate joy. She uses bright colors and they have great movement and what I call "Vibe." They almost sing to me.

What's your favorite local quilt shop? Intown is the only one I have been to. I have transportation issues and they are convenient. Favorite internet source for quilting supplies? So far I have ordered from Jo-Ann's and Keepsake Quilting.

Any other information you'd like sister guild members to know: I love my guild! Besides my church it is my only outlet for my social life. I feel blessed by the friendships I have made here and the strengthening bonds formed with my sister Elaine.



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QUILTER PROFILE:

SONIE' JOI RUFFIN

Name and where you live? My name is Sonié Joi Ruffin, I live in Kansas City

A little bit of personal information you'd like us to know: I've been married for 30 2008s to Isaac H. Ruffin, Jr. and we have a daughter named Rebekah and a dog named Mango. My business career has been spent in retail clothing management.

Please write a brief paragraph or two about your early fiber/textile/quilting history and how you came to be a well-known professional?

I always say, my mother taught me how to thread a needle and God gave me my gifts of sewing, color combining, and design. I have been sewing since I was 4 years of age. My great-grandmother, my mother and my mother's sisters were master seamstresses. My great-grandmother would let me hand sew with her when she pieced her quilts. My mother taught me how to sew on her black and gold Singer sewing machine, which I own and still use to create my quilts.

I believe it happened when I was invited to conduct a lecture and workshop at the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery in Washington, D.C. in 2005. I believe that it catapulted my career to where it is today. I was invited back to the Renwick to conduct a workshop for Family day in December 2007. I am still growing in my craft as a fabric artist and professional fabric designer and writer.

What do you like most about being a professional? What do you like least?

I like sharing my story as an African-American quilt professional and telling the truth of my community to those that often times glamorize our history as fictional tales. Sharing the story of the African-American community with other communities opens their eyes to what contributions African-American quilters have actually made through historical events and times. I like turning the least into likes!

What is your favorite class to teach? What is your dream teaching venue and subject?

My favorite class to teach is my contemporary quilted tote bag called Sonié. My dream teaching venue would be the Louvre Museum in Paris and teaching a contemporary quilt class.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



The Brown Sugar Press

Is It Just Me???

OK, so I'm taking a page from the TV guide (yes I watch TV on a regular basis) but so what! There is so much stuff in my sewing room that sometimes I can't see the floor. I know *it can't be just me.*

I have a futon in there and being short, when I stretch out on it there is just enough space at the end for fabric and whatever else that's sewing related (and some not sewing related stuff) to be stacked so high there that it is in danger of falling over if I just look at it the wrong way. I just know that flying geese ruler that I have been looking for these past few weeks is in there. *It can't be just me.*

I recently installed some shelves in the walk-in closet. Then I folded and sorted the fabric on the floor and put it in the closet on the new shelves, so why is there still fabric on the floor and on most other available flat surfaces? It still looks like all the fabric I folded and put in the closet it still in there, so where did all the fabric on the floor come from? *It can't be just me.*

I got a used book case and put all the books on the floor in the book case, but now, how did about 20 of those books get back on the floor? Surely I couldn't have been reading all those books. Because if I had then I should have produced something spectacular by now.....right? *It can't be just me.*

I have more fat quarters than I know what to do with but when I wanted to make a quilt that called only for fat quarters why did nothing seem to go together in any artistic, colorful or pleasing way? *It can't be just me.* Sometimes I just go up there and take a nap.....*it can't be just me.* I know I'm not the only one!

Come on, 'fess up, how's your sewing space? I can't be the only one taking that walk of shame. Is yours as bad as mine can sometimes be?

Because.....*It can't be just me.*

Nina Moore



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RUFFIN PROFILE CONT'D FROM PAGE 5

Have you won any major awards at quilt shows or other related venues?

The Best of Kansas, Inaugural Art Exhibition, 2006. I was invited to exhibit my works at the International Quilt Festival in Houston Texas, 2006.

What is your favorite quilt that you have made? "East Side" is my favorite quilt to date. It is in the collection of the Spencer Museum at University of Kansas. The quilt is a composition crazy quilt that tells the story of the East Side of Joplin, Mo., an African- American community that I grew up in during the 50's and 60's.

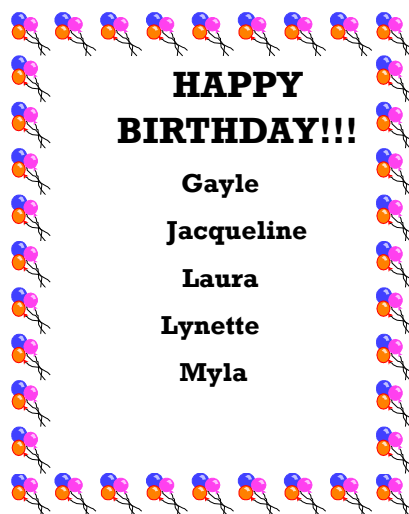
What is your favorite place in the world that your profession has taken you to?

I enjoy every city that I have had the opportunity to visit.

What do you want to do in the future in your professional career? I would like to exhibit my art work at the Louvre in Paris.

In ten words or less, what words of wisdom do you have for the quilters in our guild?

Remember, the quilt you are creating is a part of your legacy.





The Brown Sugar Press

SPECIAL HOUSTON SECTION

HOUSTON REDUX 2008

By Myla Chapman

I thoroughly enjoyed all of my classes this year. In each of the quilting classes, one thing that each instructor said, without being asked first, was that “stippling is over”. More specifically, end to end stippling on show quilts. So, save your stippling for your non-competition quilts. They all said that the bar has simply been raised too high to enter a quilt of what is now considered a lower caliber of work.

In Hollis Chatelaine’s *Quilt Line as the Third Aspect of Design* class students brought quilt tops and after some informational lecturing from Hollis, each student’s top was put up and Hollis and the other students offered ideas on how to quilt the top. Ideas included thread colors, quilting motifs and in some cases reorientation of the quilt itself.

In *Advanced Machine Quilting* with Linda Fiedler, we practiced free-motion quilting of designs provided by the instructor. I learned that I need a lot of practice drawing shapes with my hands to help me to improve my free-motion machine quilting. We learned a how to use the machine to bury the thread in the batting and eliminate tying off and cutting. I used Aurafil 50 weight cotton thread and I liked it so much that I bought more for my practice sessions. My plan is to make several quilt sandwiches to have them ready for practice.

In *Sassy Sashings and Brilliant Background Fillers* Sue Patten gave a lot of great tips for those who do long-arm quilting for customers and I would recommend this class just for those, let alone the great design inspirations for quilting borders and sashings as well as tips on tools. Based on my experience in Linda Fiedler’s class and Sue’s recommendations, I purchased some scissors that I look forward to using to make machine quilting easier.

In *Exploring Stitch-Resisted Shirbori* with Glennis Dolce we stitched silk fabrics and then further tied or folded using the stitching as a resist to get wonderful designs. I enjoyed this class, but I could use more practice with the techniques.

I like the dye we used-it only dyes silk and it is immediately colorfast; there is not a lot of rinsing and no heat-setting is required.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11



The Brown Sugar Press

Houston Bound: A Newbie's Tale

by Nancy Franklin

I guess I had been talking about going to Houston for so long my husband finally got tired of hearing it and bought my plane tickets to this year's International Quilt Festival in Houston. I got the tickets in late-September and knew how difficult it could be to get a room so I started putting my feelers out about an extra room that one of my quilting sisters may have. I got online to start checking for classes and figured I'd check the host hotels, just in case. When I got a room at the Hyatt Regency at *the festival rate*, I knew I was meant to be there.

Next step, figure out what classes I wanted to take. Over the next couple of weeks I poured over the class catalogue, read each class description, looked at the samples, reviewed the instructor's resumes', then checked availability for the classes I was interested in. I came up with a list of about 15 classes on my list of possibilities. Finally, as I looked in the catalogue to find the phone number to register for my classes, I realized that the deadline was back in late September. Dang! I resigned myself to the fact that I wasn't going to be able to take any classes. Luckily, I mentioned this to a fellow guild member and she told me there was somewhere on the festival website where people sell classes they can't attend. Hot Dang...I was back on track again!

I found the site, went through the list of for-sale classes and there were only 4 that were on my list. I emailed all four of the sellers 2 days before I was scheduled to leave. Of the four, only one person emailed back that she still wanted to sell her class. She was flying out of Houston on Wednesday, the same evening I was flying in, and there was a 1-hour window of opportunity at the airport. Luckily, I did meet her and get the ticket (Thanks Kim!) and attended the class Threadplay II with Libby Lehman. It was wonderful.

The festival itself met and exceeded my expectations. There was a smorgasbord of quilts on display and I laid eyes on every single one of them. There were many, many vendors, enough so that I saw a bunch of new products and still was able to buy all of the things I had in mind. I sat in on a few free Meet the Teacher lectures and a Make It and Take It workshop (not just to rest my feet). And I got a chance to hang out with some of the other BSS members, although I missed a couple of others.

All in all, it was a great experience. Besides the new sewing and design skills, I learned some other things. Quilters are a very social bunch. From the time I got on the airplane in Atlanta, on every bus and elevator, standing on every line, until the shuttle back to the airport in Houston, I chatted with quilters of every age and ethnicity. I learned there are no shoes comfortable enough to withstand about 8 hours of walking a day. I learned to rely on the knowledge of my fellow quilters who have gone to Festival year after year for all the details on what, when, where and how. And most of all, I learned to plan ahead. I already have my hotel reservations for next year.



The Brown Sugar Press

HOUSTON 2008

By Nina Moore

This was my second time at the show, last year being my first time. I may only go every other year from now on depending on how the money is running. I sat in a lecture on kimono textiles which was interesting. I would have been better off using that class fee on lunch - it was \$8.00. The class on color blending was taught by a black woman, Gyleen Fitzgerald and she was very entertaining, a good speaker and she also has a few poetry books featuring her quilts and those of her guild. She is a traditional quilter. The other two classes were Mixed Media Miscellany #1 and #2. Being a more non-traditional quilter I really liked these. In each class there were about 20 or so teachers and I went from table to table and saw demonstrations in various crafts and also received a booklet with a page of instructions for each demo. Anyone who like non-traditional quilting and quilting techniques would like these classes; the topics were felting-both wet and dry, screen printing, painting on quilts, pipe cleaner people (really fun), paper and fabric collage, foiling, ink painting, Angelina and more. Each Mixed Media session was 2 hours and the lectures were 1 hour. No supplies were required. I don't think I would like classes that take more than 2 hours; it takes away time from the show and the vendors.

The vendors were great although I did miss some like Treenway Silks, Dharma Trading and Evelyn Brown the Traveling Quilter. I did find out about Bonash— why hasn't anyone ever tell me about this stuff?? !!

I sort of sailed through the quilt exhibit. I did not see everything last year but this year I did. I thought the art quilts were spectacular! I can't say that I had a favorite though.

All in all I had a great time, spent an obscene amount of \$, and was tired beyond belief afterwards but it was well worth the trip. I do feel that they can do a better job with the food vendors; they have plenty of space and I feel the choices could be a lot better and more varied. Eating at the Hyatt, it was way too expensive; Massa's restaurant was very good.

At the annual Friday AAQ meet and greet, I felt that BSS had more members there than the Houston guilds; I was a little disappointed in the turn out but we still had a good time anyway.



Remember, the quilt you are creating is a part of your legacy.

Sonie Joi' Ruffin

The Brown Sugar Press

HOUSTON REDUX CONT'D FROM PAGE 9

The winners at this year's festival totaled approximately \$100,000 plus given away in prizes. One difference between winning at this IQA show and AQS is that the quilter does not have to give up his/her quilt to accept the money. You can view the winning quilts at <http://www.quilts.com/fqf08/enVivo/>. Sharon Schamber won Best of Show with her beautiful "Spirit of Mother Earth". One reason I like to attend the show is that seeing the quilts in person is very different from viewing them as photos. The 2008 Journal Quilt Exhibit was a greatly pared down version of the past exhibits since this exhibit is now juried. The Hoffmann Challenge 2008 quilts were on exhibit and I saw several (really I think all) quilts that were not on exhibit last month at the Georgia Quilt Show. The Bernina Fashion show was fantastic and unfortunately the last one. Other exhibits included dolls and the Daughters of the American Revolution quilt exhibit; while I lean toward art and pictorial quilts, I still enjoyed these antique masterpieces.

CONTINUED ON THE BACK PAGE



Deborah Sylvester next to her award winning quilt
EVENING



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Below are a few pictures from the Houston Quilt Show from this year. For more photos, please visit the private guild yahoo group site in the photo album section under Houston 2008.



Best of Show 2009
Spirit of Mother Earth
Sharon Schamber



Detail shot
Sharon Schamber's
Spirit of Mother Earth



6th Annual African American Meet and Greet
Friday, October 31, 2008



The Brown Sugar Press

UPCOMING EVENTS

BROWN SUGAR EVENTS

November Meeting—11/15—Meet at Carrie Steele Pitts Home

December Meeting-12/20—Annual Holiday Party at The Pecan in College Park, GA

January Meeting—1/17/2009-Annual Tri-Guild Challenge—What Does Going Green Mean to You? For challenge information go to the private yahoogroups site in the files area.

July 17-19, 2009—Brown Sugar Stitchers Quilt Show

OTHER EVENTS

January 20, 2009—Inauguration of Barack Hussein Obama as the 44th President of the United States, Washington, DC

March 5-7—Original Sewing and Quilt Expo, Duluth, GA

March 21-29—The 27th Annual Great Cover-Up—”Recycling Traditions” - Bulloch Hall Quilt Show—visit www.bullochhallquiltguild.com for more info

April 22-25—AQS Quilt and Show, Paducah, KY—visit http://www.americanquilter.com/shows_contests/ for more info



QUILTING HINT

Sort your fabric scraps and store in glass or plastic containers in your sewing room. Sort your scraps of fabric by colors. Use the 3 primary colors of red, yellow and blue; then by the secondary colors of green, orange, and purple. Next, sort the browns, blacks, tans, off-whites and whites. Find a quilt pattern that you could use for a patchwork quilt. The log cabin pattern is an example. Try using the off-white fabric on one side of the log cabin quilt block. Then use shades of greens in medium, dark and darkest to do the strips on the other side. It doesn't make any difference what pattern the off-white fabrics are or what order you place them as long as they are off-white. Then do the same with all of the other fabric colors. To make your quilt look more planned, keep the off-white theme going throughout all of your quilt blocks. This will make your patchwork quilt look planned even though you have used those scraps of leftover fabric. The log cabin is just one simple quilt block that could be used. There are many quilt block patterns that could accomplish the same effect.

ADVERTISING RATES

Whole Page

\$50

Half Page

\$25

3"x2" Box

\$10

Please contact editor to advertise in this newsletter:

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quiltmyla@aol.com

2008—2009

NEWSLETTER

DEADLINES:

11/29, 12/27, 1/31



**Brown Sugar Stitchers
Quilt Guild**

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brownsugarstitchers.htm](http://www.quiltsites.com/brownsugarstitchers.htm)

The Brown Sugar Stitchers Quilt Guild is a diverse group of African-American quilters in the metropolitan Atlanta area. We extend a warm welcome to visit us; November meetings are on the 3rd Saturday at 10:30A at the Wesley Chapel-William C. Brown Library, 2861 Wesley Chapel Road, Decatur, GA. Guests are welcomed at our meetings and encouraged to join after their second visit. Yearly dues are \$25 and the year starts in July. NOTE: IN JULY AND DECEMBER we participate in MEMBERS ONLY activities away from the library. Photos can be viewed at : <http://community.webshots.com/user/bssquiltguild?vhost=community> and <http://family.webshots.com/album/557120572Vzsuzq?vhost=family>.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

I have made quite a few purchases over these last few years and have come to two conclusions: 1) I will spend more than I intend to and 2) there is always something new to view and buy, so conclusion #1 is a given... I probably spent less time in the vendor hall at this show than any other. I didn't even look at the booths in the Embellishment Village area. I found some great Afro-centric patterns at Sew Fabulous; I visited with vendor friends and I tried out the HQ 16 and know that one of these machines is in my future. I stocked up on foil and crystals. I still bought a fair amount of fabric, but most of it was fabric I had planned to buy anyway. I bought a couple of pre-fused appliqué patterns to try.

Every year I think the contingent of BSS attendees grows and I think we have more guild members present and we represent at the annual Friday lunchtime African-American quilters Meet and Greet. Attendance this year was down, just as I think attendance at the show in general was noticeably less, but we still enjoyed this now annual event.

This trip to Houston was #6 for me; despite some things being very familiar, there is always something new to behold at this annual quilt show and festival. All of the top winners were lovely quilts; I think however that after six years of attending this show, I am getting familiar with styles of particular artists and the WOW factor is slightly diminished after so many years. I still enjoy the show; the quilts, the vendors, the classes, the meeting and greeting – it is still inspiring and I intend to continue attending for many years to come.