

Here is a quick translation of Filtti newsletter 2/2018

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Festive commotion

Xmas is coming with speed, Filtti's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary year is coming to an end, although the festive exhibition is just opening

Felt for Tomorrow has been an amazing struggle for a small association. The background work has required countless hours. Sirpa's unselfish toil has created this amazing possibility to exhibit our skillfulness. The exhibition has confirmed our network in Finland and abroad. We leave a mark on the felt history and a promise for the felt future.

At year end we always look at the happenings during the year. Filtti's year has been very active once again. The activity has been on exhibitions, which will be the most natural way to unite members. The monthly Skype meetings makes the rhythm effectively. It is important that our activity continues persistently as part of the felt world.

I wish all Filtti members peaceful Christmas and felt-ful new year 2019.

Eija

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Introducing Filtti's foreign members:

Susanne Breuling and Sigrid Bannier

In 2014 these two German felt makers joined Filtti while they visited Jämsä. Previous year we had invited German felt association FilzNetzwerk as international partner at our exhibition during that summer.

During summer 2014 Sigrid had a one day felt workshop making felted jewellery and Susanne was familiarizing herself with Finnish felt. They work together even then, marketing their products together and participating major sales events together. Their cooperation still continues and now they have joint products and material purchases.

During this fall I spend a full week in Germany with the ladies. We had holiday enjoying wine region and events on the wine areas of Mosel and Rhein rivers, visiting small craft places and visiting Trier, the oldest city in Germany and quickly stopping in Strasbourg in France. At the end of the tourist season it was nice to see the city centers with masses of people.

'Sigrid

Sigrid's studio is in Kusel, in Rheinland-Pfalz state, neighbouring in west with Luxemburg and France. She lives about 7 kilometers from Kusel in even smaller town. The area is hilly, partly forested, broadly farming area. Hills and valleys make the scenery beautiful and interesting. Forests are almost entirely without undergrowth. Animals one can mention wild boars and deer, there are many of both in the area.

Frankfurt is about 654 kilometers from Kusel. Kusel is a very charming little town. The town had activated its inhabitants this past summer with wooden built benches, which companies, associations and even private people have painted. Similar benches are truly neat and they spark up the town.

Sigrid also has a small boutique and people stop at her shop window to look at the felt products. Felt hats especially interest passerby, many stop in also as customers. Sigrid's hat collection is inclusive. Large traditional brimmed hats sell the best. The newest new is an American style baseball cap, which is double-sided. She has also a collection of head decorations for party outfits.

Nowadays Sigrid is interested making felt carpets. A sparkle she got a year ago when she participated on Eija Pirttilahti's carpet making course in Jämsä.

Sigrid tutors various felt courses, also private lessons if a customer wants. She has had courses outside Germany in Italy, Mongolia and USA and twice also in Finland.

Susanne

Susanne lives in Schwarzwald, which is a mountainous area in south-western area in Germany, in Baden-Württemberg state. The largest city is Stuttgart. We drove from Strasbourg to Schwarzwald through Sachsen land visiting Freiburg. There we arrived just in time for a big market. I admire Germany markets: lots of stands, in autumn they are full of various fruits, cheese, wine, oils, wooden items, baskets, flowers and wreaths. I could have spent hours there. Freiburg is a beautiful town with colorful wooden houses.

I thought that castles are located on river banks, but to my surprise we saw many castles when closing the Schwarzwald. Many mountain tops had a castle, some were even operating as cafes or hotels.

Susanne's workshop and boutique is in Schiltach on a small street which is popular with tourists in the center of so called old town. Quaint wooden houses give color to the town. Susanne's boutique is downstairs of the building together with a small work area. She also sells carded wool. The boutique has two show windows, now there were mainly hats on show. The space upstairs is for courses. Susanne lives in Schramberg, 11 kilometers from her boutique. Schramberg is called a city with five valleys, it is located over 400 meters from sea level. The city center is down in the valley and many houses are high on the mountain. The landscape is gorgeously beautiful.

At home Susanne's work space is on the top floor of the house. The large stock of wool, mainly local uncarded wool is taking the space. Susanne prefers to use Finn sheep wool. Screenprinting and dyeing are also Susanne's skills: dye kettles and a large printing table are also here.

The studios of both ladies are in such a good shape. Both can start making whatever product or a course any time, everything needed is close to their hands. Versatile know-how!

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Making the felt carpet

During last winter we decided to make a large felted carpet for our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary exhibition. The Russian feltmakers had many times during their visits asked if we could make soam felt together.

Eija Pirttilahti promised to plan the designs and felting work. Eeva Piesala offered the space for the course. She has a large summer terrace built in her garden, there we were able to arrange a large table space for the carpet.

11 Russian felt makers participated in felting the carpets. 8 Filtti members also took part, The 3<sup>rd</sup> of July was the coldest day of this summer. The wind was heavy and extremely cold with some drops of rain. We started the work about 9 in the morning.

Eija had thought of the designs being letters, everyone's initials. The colors were the natural colors of Finn sheep fibers: white, grey, dark brown and dyed black. The wool was donated by Piiku. First task was to felt the letters: they were made on needlefelt size 40x40 cms. The light color letters were cut out and based on the darker base and then dark color letter were based on light base. Finished slightly felted pieces were placed on the large table and arranged separating the light and dark parts. Then the designed parts were turned around, and a white carded fleece was placed on top. This was rolled with bubble wrap into a huge roll. The roll was worked for some time; opened and set on the table to dry. At the end of the day the still wet carpet travelled to Pohjaslahti to Eija's sauna to dry.

The following day we gathered at Koskenpää felt factory. The carpet got more wool: a recycled needle felt was set in between the felted design layer and the bottom carded wool layers. This totality was driven through the needle machine. This way the designs were attached to the other layers. The carpet was taken again to Pohjaslahti to Eija's studio, where she put the carpet on her rolling machine and worked it for ten hours. When wet the carpet weight over 35 kilos. It had 10 kilos of dry wool.

The other group of Russian felt makers came on August 5<sup>th</sup>, the closing day of the exhibition Let's were Felt, to pick up their exhibition pieces. August 6<sup>th</sup> we went to Alho felt factory for the carpet's finishing operation. The machine has wide large metals pipes on a board, the carpet moves beneath the rolls with hot water running through. This way the carpets shrinks and tightens and it will be suitable for use.

Once again Eija took the carpet to her studio, tidied the edges, dried the carpet and pressed it with steam before it was ready to be placed on show at the exhibition.

The whole procedure was filmed by Laura Karppinen. There is no music in the video, the sounds of the machines are taking care of the sounds. The texts are not yet ready but when the exhibition opens on 14<sup>th</sup> December the carpet with the edited video is ready to be exhibited.

Eija did not only plan the designs and the work, but she handled the transport, drying and tidying. Hard work, but the results speaks for itself. The carpet is BEAUTIFUL!

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Let's wear Felt!

exhibition at Kivipankki gallery during summer 2018

As the name says, the exhibition was focused on clothes and accessories. 25 Filtti members participated with 47 works and we had invited 15 Russian felters with 27 works to the exhibition.

There were vests, jackets, tunics, dresses, coats, hats, scarves, backpacks, bags, jewellery, boots, shoes and slippers – really an inclusive collection of felted clothes. The colors on the downstairs hall in Kivipankki was harmoniously dark as the rooms upstairs had more colorful spectrum.

The feedback of the exhibition was surprising: the visitors were amazed when seeing such a large collection of clothes and accessories made of felt. During 20 years Filtti has served the visitors exhibiting every summer various felted items.

The street in front of the gallery was under renovation, which greatly disturbed the visitors and the exhibition with noise and dust, also the entry to the gallery was not easy. There were less visitors this summer, one reason was that the parking was not possible in front of the gallery. Now the front of the Kivipankki gallery is fine and next summer we will not have the entry problem at all.

The graffiti in the garden interests visitors every summer. Some of the trees got a felted upholstery around the stem. The summer was hot and dry; but felt holds the changing weather well.

Important in page 35

instructions to send parcels in Finland

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Kivipankki gallery during summer 2019

Something Red

Opening 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at 4 pm

The exhibition is five weeks long

International works come from Ireland

A more specific information will be posted early next year

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Merry and Peaceful Christmas time to everyone!