

Mystery in Middleburgh 2011-2012 Mystery Quilt

A few years ago, my friend, Tonika and I went to a quilt show in Middleburgh, New York. It was a wonderful show at the Public Library with small quilts displayed in shop windows on Main Street and a free tour of the Doctor's House Museum which had a collection of antique quilts on display along with all the amenities of the home, doctor's office and tools of the era.

While viewing the quilts we came upon one quilt which caused Tonika tilted her head one way and then the other and say, "Marcy, where are the blocks?" The traditional subtle coloring and turn of the block cause me to tilt my head too. After a moment I pointed to a block circling the air around its perimeters. Tonika said "Huh! I see now." We studied it for some time.

Tonika and I share the same birthday, the anniversary of which was about a month away. The next day I sat down with my EQ6 and went to the blocks I recognized in the quilt. But none were quite right. I used the easy draw feature and drew out the blocks as I remembered them, colored them and added them to a layout. When I played with the symmetry feature it was magic. I laid out the pattern and rotary cuts, bought fabrics in Tonika's favorite colors (autumn hues) and gave it to her as a gift.

When I asked, this past May, if I could design/plan the Mystery Quilt for this coming guild year, I was given a supportive go-ahead. I popped up my EQ6 program and started flashing through some past designs when one caught the eye of my mentor; and with her consent the decision was made to use Tonika's birthday gift, the EQ6 design in which subtle changes to traditional blocks make for greater flexibility of design.

It lends itself to any color scheme your imagination can engineer. It is a traditional quilt when use of traditional color is in play and blocks are aligned symmetrically. Conversely, with a black and white or gold background & vibrant jewel colors the look updates to a brilliant youthful look. With dark gray & white or light gray and black background & plaid flannels it becomes a manly or camp quilt; or pink and blue pastels background for little ones and so on. A twist or turn of the blocks and the layout's overall look varies greatly. It works for every gender and age. It can even be worked as an "organized" scrappy quilt.

Others may study it and say "It looks really complicated!" This is not so. It is very simple. Squares and an angled cut or two (one of which is optional) turn this traditional quilt pattern into quilt tops with great interest and appeal. Both angled cuts are made easily with simple instructions / templates for proper alignment.

Even better the fun and mystery goes beyond use of color and pattern. The layout variations are a bonus transformation you will receive offering many distinctively different possibilities as an additional surprise with great visual magnetism!

Trust this: if I can create it, you can easily make it. I don't like hard to do things. So enjoy the easy to finish, no sweat monthly segments. Go forth and do what you love, create for beauty's sake. If it satisfies you it is a thing of beauty and it is a work of art! ;o)

Since I wrote this introduction to the mystery quilt back in June the town has changed. Schoharie Country has been devastated by hurricane Irene. Whole neighborhoods are gone. I am sure the local quilt guild has suffered loss as well. I know not a soul in Middleburg, but fondly remember the kindness and friendly nature of those women and the beauty of their quilts. I encourage you to join in the fun of this Mystery quilt in honor of those women.