

## Michigan Fiber Festival Instructors 2023

**Julie Benac** has been in the world of fiber arts since 2006, and has been in the cut & sew industry for over 30 years. She holds a degree in Fashion Design from Ray College of Design in Chicago (now a part of the Art Institute). Julie is a familiar face in sewing classrooms, as well as inner-city Detroit where she taught homeless mothers how to sew on industrial equipment. Now she is bringing fiber arts skills into the light, teaching carding and fiber prep, as well as artisan yarn spinning at various fiber festivals around the Midwest. Julie enjoys trying different ways to marry fiber arts with sewing to discover new directions in clothing accent and design. She lives on Lake Erie in southeast Michigan with her husband Patrick and three children...and a lot of weaving looms!



**Kelly Brandt** started on her wool craft odyssey in 1975 with four heritage horned Dorset sheep who came to her five acre homestead in Lake Odessa "just to keep the pasture down." As an accomplished seamstress, she first used her wool harvest in wool-filled comforters, but soon taught herself to locker hook, spin, and felt. She first got involved in FiberFest in Hastings in the early 1980s and has been teaching since 1985 in Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin. She is a published author and has won artistic awards for her work using wool and llama fiber from her flocks. Through her fiber based cottage business, Team Effort Artisans, Kelly has shown and sold fine wool craft at shows, galleries, and festivals. She offers private classes at her studio/barn outside Lake Odessa. Prospective students are invited to contact her with questions about the content of her classes at [kellybrandt@yahoo.com](mailto:kellybrandt@yahoo.com) or at 616-374-7176.



**M Theresa Brown** is a long time professional portrait artist whose art career continues to embrace many areas of the Arts. Her years of printmaking and color work led her to explore the fiber arts. Using many similar skills and accumulated knowledge, she evolved as a hand painter and ecoprinter on natural fibers. She uses natural dyes and low impact synthetic dyes and merges them into unique, beautiful designs on silk and wool. She turns her transformed fabrics into artisanal clothing, accessories and art. Her articles and designs have appeared in international publications such as "No Serial Number" and "Belle Armoire". She and her artist husband, Stephen Filarsky reside in rural NC with their alpacas, chickens and family dogs!



**Riona Buckmaster** lives in Mt. Pleasant, TN, working a small farm with her husband to build flocks of Icelandic sheep & heritage poultry. She was given knitting needles at age 6 (to keep out from underfoot), embroider at 10 (to sit still), and plunged into the rabbit hole of the fiber arts world from there. Roiana has been teaching for 8 years, both at fiber festivals across the South and at the shop on the farm. She attributes her skills to Grandma Irene and promised to teach those skills to others.



**Heidi Bukoski** grew up in an artistic household. She learned to sew & knit as a child. In high school, her mother taught her to weave, which she studied further in college. At that time, she added dyeing & spinning to her repertoire. She has spent her life increasing her knowledge of different techniques. She has experimented with most fiber processes and loves to combine them to achieve her desired end. While weaving



& felting are still her main focus, the last 15 years she has become more serious about jewelry and working with wire in various ways; including making it. She conducted her first workshops in the mid-70s, took time off for family & children, and now teaches throughout the Midwest.

**Christina Drennen Coghill** is a life long fiber artist. She started crocheting at a young age. Then she learned to spin yarn. Spinning then went into knitting and weaving, followed by dyeing and felting. Christina also picked up an antique sock knitting machine along the way and now creates items on her antique LeGare CSM and all of her other fiber equipment. Christina is a fiber addict and loves all things fibery. She is a certified Redding Method Master Dyer and Redding Method Teacher. She takes her dyeing very serious, but she also likes having fun with it and loves bright and vibrant colors! When she isn't working with fiber, Christina enjoys spending time with her family and her dogs.



**Beth Collier** has been spinning and felting for almost 20 years. She and her husband Steve own Three Creeks Farm, a small family farm in Charlotte, TN where they have sheep, goats and a variety of other animals. They also sell their fleeces, roving and spinning related products. Beth does a variety of fiber arts including dyeing, felting, spinning and just a tad of weaving. When not spinning or felting she enjoys her grandchildren. [tn3creeksfarm@gmail.com](mailto:tn3creeksfarm@gmail.com) [www.3creeksfarm.com](http://www.3creeksfarm.com)



**Dawn Edwards** is a felt artist and tutor based in Plainwell, Michigan. She sells her work under the label 'Felt So Right' and teaches extensively within the USA and internationally. Her felt art has appeared in numerous exhibitions, shows, magazines and books, including Ellen Bakker's book, *Worldwide colours of Felt*, several issues of the Australian 'FELT' magazine (most recently the 2023 winter issue), the International Feltmakers Association *Felt Matters* journal, the HGA journal *Shuttle, Spindle & Dyepot*. Dawn's felt vessel, 'The Earth Beneath My Feet' (2022) and her 'Blue Coral' felt hat (2020) were both chosen as juried selections for FELT:Fiber Transformed in the magazine 'Fiber Art Now'. Dawn is the co-coordinator of the not-for-profit group, 'Felt United' which currently has over 7,500 members with the goal of uniting felt makers from all around the world.



**Tina Etter**, Once upon a time there was a little girl who lived in the big city and loved all things art. Then she grew up and did grownup stuff. One day she found herself on her very own small farm surrounded by llamas and sheep. "Oh my," she said, "now I can try all things wool." So she did and found felting was fun and NEEDLE FELTING was the very best. The End.



**Mary Germain** has been a knitter most of her life, has been teaching knitting, weaving and other fiber arts since 1983, and was owner the The Wool Works, a yarn shop in Milwaukee, WI from 1985-1996. Inspired by Latvian friends, Mary has published patterns on Latvian knitting in Piecework magazine. Trips to Latvia since 2001 and Estonia since 2005 have provided Mary with more knitting inspiration. Mary has self-published several books and teaches throughout the Midwest, including Sievers School of Fiber Arts since 1999. Farther abroad, Mary has made trips to both coasts to present classes on Latvian Mittens and other knitting topics. She writes about her knitting travels at [www.marygtheknitter.blogspot.com](http://www.marygtheknitter.blogspot.com).



**Nicole Gillies** was born and raised in Trenton, Michigan where she developed a curiosity for art of all genres. She attended the College for Creative Studies in Detroit with a focus on Fiber Art when she learned fashion design, weaving, felting, dying and much more. She also has a Master's Degree in Library and Information Science and works as a Children's librarian, sharing her love of art with her children and the young people of her community. In her spare time, she is a ravenous felter and owner of Roving Eye Textiles, making beautiful flowers, vessels and NUno scarves for galleries and art festivals in the Detroit area. She is most proud of a felted vessel that she made while attending a workshop at the Michigan Fiber Festival!



**Robin Goatey** is a Heritage Arts Instructor & Folklorist. His You Tube channel has free Heritage Arts lessons for my students and customers.

Social & Ecommerce:

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**Sharon Herwig** has been crocheting for over 50 years. She is a member of the Crochet Guild of America (CGOA) and has completed the Master of Advanced Stitches & Techniques program. Sharon also enjoys knitting, spinning, and dyeing. With a background in graphic design, she loves to play with color & texture and experimenting with free-form crochet. You can currently find her teaching crochet at Heritage Spinning & Weaving in Lake Orion, MI.



**Christina Hornby** is a certified McGown teacher and has a BA in Art from Siena Heights University. Christine is the owner/proprietor of Green Dragonfly Studio, which specializes in rug hooking, fiber arts, watercolors, and interior accent pieces. Green Dragonfly Studio is both an outlet for her fiber works but also supplies tools for other artists and craftspeople. Rug Hooking is Christine's special outlet for design and use of color. She enjoys designing patterns for herself and other





hookers. Born and raised in Holland, Michigan, Christine comes from a long and rich heritage of artists dating back to her mother and grandmother who painted landscapes and other subjects in oils. Following in their footsteps Christine has enjoyed her pursuit of art since she was a small child and has switched from oils to watercolors, to fibers. The foundation of most of her art is the fun that comes from playing with color. She enjoys concepts of design and the need to create art that is both rich in heritage and contemporary. She applies her knowledge of art history and crafts to historical re-enactment, educating the public on the importance of arts and crafts in their communities. Her work is currently in local collections of JSJ Corporation, a Grand Rapids law firm and private collections, as well as at Grand Valley State University.

**Tammy Jordan** is a fourth generation fiber artist who enjoys sharing her passion with everyone she meets. She has a fiber-arts business, Goldieknots Montana, specializing in Montana-grown wool, yarn, spinning fiber and "Made in Montana" gift items. Prior to moving to Montana, she lived in Southern California and the Pocono Mountains where she was Humane Education specialist for the SPCA. Her teaching style is fun, creative and interactive. She's taught at festivals throughout the United States including Trailing of the Sheep, Estes Park Wool Market, Copper K Fiber Festival and the Southeastern Animal Fiber Fair. When she's not traveling and teaching, or in her studio creating, you can find her spending time with her dogs, sheep, horse and other barnyard critters.



**Kathy Krisher** is an experienced fiber artist from Hartville, Ohio. She sells quality fibers, felting supplies, embroidered t-shirts and apparel, and fiber art books in her booth, DreamWeaver Fiber. She vends and teaches fiber art classes in North East Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, and North Carolina. Kathy a member of the Canton Ohio Fiber Arts Guild.



**Bev Larson** has been weaving since 1988 and teaching since 1999. She loves to share the joy of basket weaving with those around her and has done so by teaching in Indiana, Illinois, Florida, Kentucky, Michigan, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Wisconsin, California and the Caribbean on the Basket Weaving Cruises. Making basket weaving fun, relaxing, and inspiring is her goal. In 2003 she won the Eiteljorg Museums Weavers Challenge. In 2009 she added broom making as an outshoot of weaving and it too in now a passion. In 2016 she received the honor of being named an Indiana Artisan by the State of Indiana for both broom making and basket weaving.



**Kathy McMinn** started weaving baskets over 30 years ago. She has owned The Basket Sampler in Highland, MI since 2007. There are many styles of baskets that interest her, from simple pencil baskets to more complicated twill patterns. She often incorporates yarns and fibers into her baskets. She teaches all age groups from preschool to senior citizens. You can see some of her work at her website [www.thebasketsampler.com](http://www.thebasketsampler.com).



**Heather Macali** is an artist, designer, and educator. She received her MFA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and is currently an Associate Professor of Fashion and Fibers at Wayne State University in Detroit, MI. She has a vast knowledge of fiber techniques, specializing in dyeing, textile design, floor loom and jacquard weaving.



**Nancy Macali** has been teaching for 44 years and taught high school for 35 years. Throughout her retirement she has continued to give workshops and guest lectures. Nancy's love of fibers started in her youth living next-door to her grandmother who taught her to knit, sew, and garden. Nancy continued her pursuit of fiber knowledge throughout college to present day. As an artist and creator, she is skilled in weaving, knitting, felting, dyeing, spinning, sewing, and other various techniques. Nancy is passionate about sharing her knowledge with others and encourages the exchange of creative discourse.



**Bex Oliger** grew up in her mother's (Carol Leigh Brack-Kaiser) Hillcreek Fiber Studio. She started to learn weaving and dyeing at a young age and has traveled the country for over 35 years with the family business vending and teaching at fiber, weaving and knitting Shows. She helped design and weave several of the projects in Carol Leigh's book, *The Continuous Strand Weaving Method* and assisted at numerous natural dye workshops featured in *Nature Provides: Rainbows of Color*. Bex is now a knitwear designer; knitting, weaving, and natural dyeing instructor and consultant; and, owns Hillcreek Yarn Shoppe in Columbia, MO. She and her husband, Eric; son, Charlie; and apprentice, Alexis, travel to 18 states a year to vend and teach at festivals and for guilds and groups.



**Case Runyan** has been a fiber artist – knitter, spinner, pattern designer, weaver, dyer, processor – for 20 years, and is now the owner of Aoire Maith Fibre Studios, a small-scale fiber studio dedicated to helping promote the benefits of wool, working with small, local shepherds, and fostering the use and continued breeding of the endangered sheep breeds on The Livestock Conservancy's Shave Em to Save Em list (but really, she loves all the wool all the time). Case is dedicated to opening the fiber arts to everyone, offering affordable tools and techniques that can be practiced with ease and creating opportunities for anyone at any skill level to enjoy and make progress in the fiber arts.



**Joan Sheridan** is a weaver, knitter, spinner, fiber explorer and owner of Heritage Spinning and Weaving in Lake Orion Michigan since 2000. Trained as an educator and curriculum developer by the US Army, she is a natural teacher and leader. She attended College for Creative studies and graduated from Wayne State University. Since 2012, Joan has volunteered in The Henry Ford museums conservation department as a textile specialist. In 2020, Long Thread Media released a video of Joan's Turned Krokbragd on the Inkle class. She has taught at the Michigan League of Handweavers annual conferences, at guilds and fiber festival, and at her shop in person and via Zoom. He has been published in Handwoven, Spin-Off, Ashford's The Wheel, Piecework, Little looms and other magazines.



**Anette Skoog** is a veterinarian, Gotland sheep breeder and professional Scandinavian skinnfell (sheepskin coverlets) maker. She learned the art of skinnfell making in her country of origin, Sweden, and has taught classes and exhibited her work in many locations in North America since moving to the USA in 2016. She has received recognition for her work at juried art and craft shows such as American Craft Council yearly show in Baltimore and Winter Park Art Festival in Orlando. Skoog has taught Scandinavian traditional handcraft at well known shows in the wool and fiber community including Maryland Sheep & Wool, Wisconsin Sheep & Wool and Estes Park wool market. Anette left her corporate career in the pharmaceutical industry to establish a 500 sheep/200 cattle livestock operation and has bred Gotland Sheep for more than 15 years. Today, she and her family run a 100 ewe Gotland flock for meat, wool and pelt production and live on a farm in northwest Michigan. Annette's time is spent raising sheep, creating fiber arts and caring for the land on the family farm. She also competes on the national level in the sport of archery and has been ranked as top- 16th senior female recurve archer in USA 2020.



**Amy Tyler** has degrees in modern dance, kinesiology, and physiology. Her art and science backgrounds give her a keen understanding of learning and analyzing movement skills, composition, pattern recognition, and systematic exploration. She translates that understanding into practical approaches to spinning and knitting techniques. She teaches spinning and knitting at venues across the country and is well known for her animated and engaging teaching style. Amy has numerous articles published in Spin Off, and PLY Magazine; and she has also published in Interweave Knits, and Handwoven. You can find out more about her work on her website, [www.stonesockfibers.com](http://www.stonesockfibers.com)



**Megan Williams** is a maker. She prefers “maker” because it encompasses all the things she is: sewer, dyer, weaver, spinner, felter, crocheter, leather worker, builder, grower, teacher, & student. She is focused on making both beautiful objects & wonderful communities. Megan owns and runs a small textile arts business called Adventure Textiles. She likes using her business to make products with whatever technique she is currently experimenting with. Check out her website [www.adventuretextiles.com](http://www.adventuretextiles.com) for examples of what she does with natural dyes & cyanotypes.



Megan has been teaching natural dye workshops all around Michigan for over 5 years and is excited to bring her knowledge of natural dyes to the Michigan Fiber Festival. She structures her workshops as an in-depth study into the process & science behind dyeing with natural materials & cyanotype printing. She hopes every student will learn a lot and be confident in being able to replicate the results at home.

**Liza Q Wirtz** better known as Q (aka the Chief Feline), runs a multifaceted fiber-arts business, the Foldout Cat, from her home studio with the frequent and welcome assistance of partners Fiber J and Maker J and the help of a fluctuating number of cats. Having spent several past lives in other occupations—including bookseller, lawyer, and professional singer—Q now works fulltime towards earning her living as an artist and a creative. Q makes and sells one-of-a-kind art batts built from the Foldout Cat's unique Batt Buffet, featuring Merino wool, Angelina, bamboo, silks, and more. She also sells handspun yarn, hand-dyed microbatch yarn and fiber, finished fiber-arts items, and simple fiber-arts tools. Q teaches freestyle weaving on approachable, easy-to-use two-harness floor looms;



art-batt carding on Howard Brush blending boards/hand cards and Strauch carders; and, basic exploratory spinning on her herd of wheels both analog and electric. She has taught, vended, or both at fiber events in multiple states, including Colorado, Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. Q weaves, spins, dyes, and cards with the same philosophy that infuses her teaching: create from your heart and make what gives you joy! She wholeheartedly believes in putting beauty into the world; she does not believe in the Fiber Police. Find her as FoldoutCat on Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, TikTok, and Twitter and on her website, [foldoutcat.com](http://foldoutcat.com).