



INSPIRED TO
Sew

*A glimpse into the creative heart of today's
most talented sewing & quilting artists.*



**Ebony
Love**



**Cheryl
Sleboda**



**Frieda
Anderson**



**Reen
Wilcoxson**



**Angela
Wolf**



From left to right:
 Scott Wernet, Frieda Anderson, Angela Wolf,
 Reen Wilcoxson, Rita Farro, Cheryl Sleboda, Ebony Love,
 Rhonda Pierce, Rolando Bohleemann, Pete Jans

Recently we had visitors from the Industrial Division of SCHMETZ Germany. To help SCHMETZ executives better understand the consumer market, many activities were arranged.

Yes, we had traditional meetings and visited retail shops, but we also toured Modern Quilt Studio with Weeks Ringle and Bill Kerr and ended the week with a star studded designer showcase with five designers from the Chicago area. Each designer presented their special niche in the marketplace. The result was aptly described by SCHMETZ as "astonishing!" The day was laced with energy, talent, savvy and a passion for creativity.

These five business women demonstrated grit, talent, creativity and strategic work. With hard work, that never goes out of style, they make awesome contributions to the sewing industry that we love. Meet, or re-meet, because several ladies have already been featured in **SCHMETZ Inspired to SEW**: Cheryl Sleboda, Ebony Love, Reen Wilcoxson, Frieda Anderson and Angela Love. Five shining stars that make sewing even more fun!
 Sew SCHMETZ & Grabbit Too!

Rhonda

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In this Issue:

Sewing Stars: Cheryl, Ebony, Reen, Frieda, Angela
 Page 3

Needle Points: Needle Anatomy
 Page 9

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Sewing
Star

Design Stars!

Cheryl Sleboda

Cheryl Sleboda is an edgy, left of center designer who was featured in **SCHMETZ Inspired to SEW #25**. At that time, she was still working her “day job” in the comic book industry. Her side business, **Muppin.com** (www.muppin.com), was about teaching heirloom sewing techniques and combining them with light up technologies for fabric. She designed a very popular skull and cross needle logo, so she also found herself in the t-shirt business.

When we interviewed Cheryl, she talked about how and why she made one six-inch square art quilt every week ... for FIVE YEARS. By making one small art quilt every week, she learned new skills and techniques. She learned how to adapt technology to her projects, using lights and conductive thread, and she revisited traditional heirloom techniques, combining those vintage methods with the latest technology. By challenging herself to create a new micro-quilt every week, she developed her own voice. Looking back, those little quilts also serve as a journal of where she started and how far she’s come.

Since that interview, Cheryl’s life has undergone some dramatic changes. She decided to make sewing her full-time job and is operating two businesses. **Muppin.com**, her existing long-standing quilting and merchandise business, has branched out to include a consulting business for independent retailers. When she worked in the comic book industry, she taught stores how to use technology to improve their business. She has transitioned those skills into helping quilt shops increase business through social media and online marketing.

She established her second business, **Sew Much Cosplay™**, as a cosplay brand for a line of sewing tools and products for cosplayers. While attending scores of comic conventions, she saw for herself how many consumers were involved in cosplay and how enthusiastic they were about making their own costumes. The goal of this brand is to educate cosplayers on sewing techniques, and introduce them to the independent sewing retailer.

Cheryl is looking forward to vending at C2E2, a comic book convention in Chicago. Cheryl will be doing a presentation on basic sewing instruction and will lead a cosplay panel.



Ebony Love



Ebony Love was featured in **SCHMETZ Inspired to SEW #27**. After earning a degree in engineering, she worked full time for a large corporation. Increasingly, she yearned for a more creative path. Ebony has always been a maker.

To scratch that creative itch, Ebony took commissions for custom quilts. She loved it! That led to her first sewing business, **LoveBug Studios**. Her career in the sewing industry really took off when she discovered die cutting. Ebony purchased custom “dies” to cut circles for a quilt she was making. At the time, she didn’t even realize she needed a die cutting machine to use the dies. Learning about the various machines and dies that were coming on the market became her mission, and she stopped taking custom quilt commissions. She realized other consumers might also be struggling to figure out this new thing so she wrote a book, **The Big Little Book of Fabric Die Cutting Tips**.

While working on an updated edition to her best-selling book, Ebony identified another gap in the market relating to the types of available dies and other products for quilters who love making traditional quilts. She partnered with Sizzix to launch a line of dies under her **LoveBug Studios** brand to introduce new shapes and block possibilities to the quilting public. Ebony rounds out her product offering by producing patterns, templates, books and videos to help people make beautiful quilts.

Die cutting isn’t the only thing for which Ebony is well known. She is hostess of uniquely-themed mystery quilts, which often center around popular books or television series. Her first big hit was based on Downton Abbey, partnering with Andover Fabrics, and has since introduced mysteries for Outlander, Anne of Green Gables, Little House on the Prairie, and Jane Austen’s novels.

Ebony recently opened another sewing business — **MADE** (www.madecreativestudio.com), a Creative Fiber Arts Studio in Mundelein, Illinois. “MADE is a place for people who already love making things, or who want to learn to love making them. It’s a place for creatives to gather, to learn, and to grow. MADE offers classes in sewing, die cutting, patchwork and appliqué, and long arm quilting.” MADE is a by-appointment creative



studio, where customers can rent space or equipment. The die cutting stations are equipped with AccuQuilt and Sizzix machines and over 1000 dies. There is also a long arm lab outfitted with Handi Quilter machines.

Reen Wilcoxson



Reen Wilcoxson was featured in **SCHMETZ Inspired to SEW #40**. That issue was all about “In The Hoop” (ITH) embroidery designs, and Reen is considered “the expert” in this exciting machine embroidery specialty. ITH designs are 3D items created in the machine embroidery hoop: purses, wallets, key rings, etc. Designs are created in steps with stops after each step. When the machine stops you add fabric, trim, manipulate fabrics, etc. When the design is finished it’s trimmed and turned to the right side as if you had sewn it using a sewing machine. Although nobody knows for sure who invented ITH, there is no doubt that Reen Wilcoxson is a pioneer in the field. She earned a reputation as a top notch designer of ITH designs, and is considered by many to be the premiere teacher of ITH techniques. Her projects are well designed, with easy to follow instructions, and her classes sell out quickly.

Like many women, Reen wanted to be home when her children were small. She always loved to sew and did craft shows for 25 years. She was very successful doing large juried shows. The first time she saw an embroidery machine (in 1997), she had to have it. At that time, there was very little information or support available for embroidery enthusiasts, so Reen taught herself how to digitize, and became active on the early Yahoo boards.

Reen’s first project completely designed in the hoop was a lollipop holder. She put two pieces of felt together and from that began creating fully lined purses with zippers and other innovative designs all stitched within the constraints of a hoop. Her teenage son built her first website, and she started to sell her embroidery designs in 2001. She has a Facebook page (with 82,000 followers), a Facebook group (with 45,000 members) and she posts on Instagram every other day.

She designs and sells ‘in the hoop’ machine embroidery files online through her website, www.EmbroideryGarden.com. She does all the designing, digitizing, instructions, web page work and advertising herself. Like many entrepreneurs in the sewing industry, she does not have a staff — although, she does have many testers.



Reen says, “It’s important for me to have testers who stitch my designs and go over the instructions for accuracy. Their feedback is invaluable, because even though I always know where I’m headed with a new project, I need to be sure the directions are clear enough so that every home embroiderer will achieve the desired result.”

Frieda Anderson



Frieda Anderson is a self-employed quilt artist, who has earned just about every accolade and award the great big colorful world of quilting has to offer. (www.friestyle.com) Even though she has a degree in art history and an associate degree in fashion design, by 1992, she realized all she wanted to do was make quilts – and that's been her focus ever since. Her one-of-a-kind art quilts are usually machine quilted and often inspired by nature. She hand dyes her own cotton, silk and linen fabrics, creating an intensity of color and texture which make her quilts unique and recognizable. Her quilts have been exhibited and won awards at the biggest quilt shows in the world.

Frieda designs her own art quilt patterns, and has written several books on the subject:

Art Quilter: Fusible Collage, Laura Wasilowski & Frieda Anderson with Nancy Zieman

Fabric to Dye For, C&T Publishing

Fun Fast Fusies, American Quilter's Society

Frieda's Fun Fast Free Motion Machine Quilting, Self-published

Frieda also teaches Craftsy classes, and sometimes vends at international shows selling her hand dyed fabrics and quilt patterns. Because she is one of the most popular speakers on the quilt guild/show/ event circuit, she travels extensively, teaching her techniques to quilters all over the world. She may be coming to a venue near you. Here's her busy 2018 April schedule:

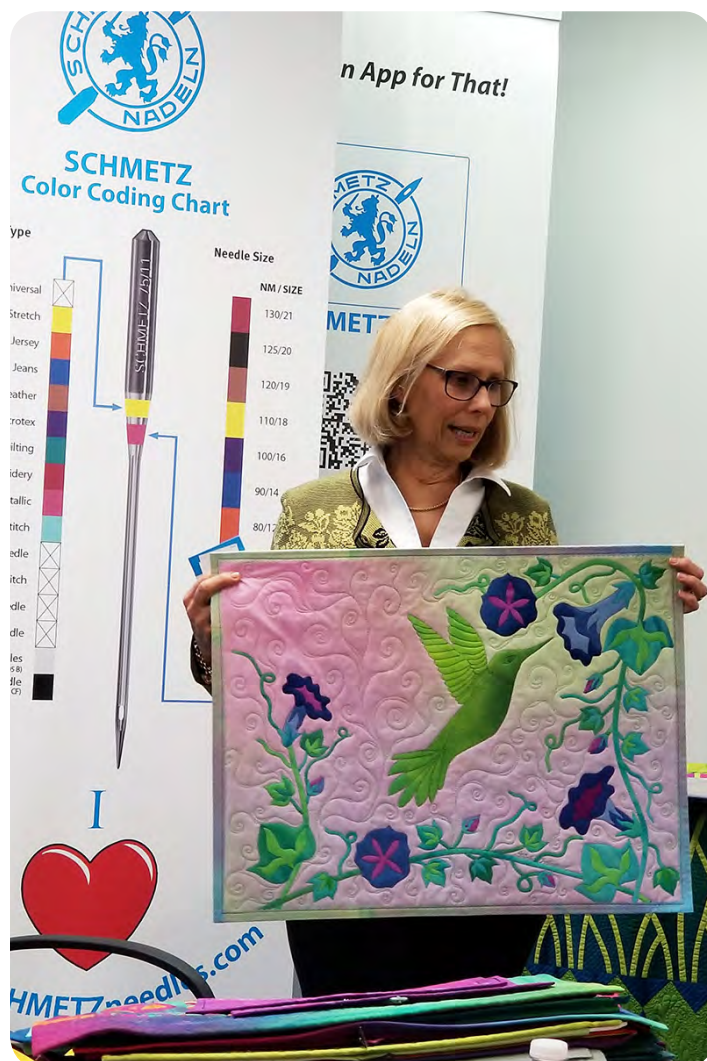
April 4-7 Original Sewing and Quilting Expo, Cleveland OH

April 10 – Heritage Quilt Guild, Lockport IL

April 12-14 International Quilt Festival, Chicago IL

April 24-28 American Quilt Society, Paducah KY

If you'd like to have Frieda visit and teach at your guild, contact her at: frieda@friestyle.com.



Angela Wolf

Angela Wolf was featured in **SCHMETZ Inspired to SEW #29**. With her sparkling personality, and reputation for creativity and hard work — she has become one of the brightest lights in the constellation of “stars” in the sewing industry. The anchor of the PBS series *It’s Sew Easy*, hosts a popular weekly Facebook Live show “*Behind-the-Scenes*,” and online instructor with over 140,000 students. She is a fashion and pattern designer, founder of **ABO Apparel** and **Angela Wolf Pattern Collection**, author of the book **How To Start a Home Based Fashion Business**, spokesperson, brand ambassador, blogger, and consultant.

Angela started sewing at a young age and continued to design women’s apparel all thru college. With an entrepreneurial spirit and passion for fashion and sewing, she launched and ran a successful custom apparel and alteration business for over 18 years. In 2008, Angela was a contestant in the “*Passion For Fashion*” contest at the American Sewing Expo (ASE) in Novi, Michigan. Similar to *Project Runway*, the contestants were issued a challenge and given a budget to shop for fabric on the show floor. They sewed their garments in an arena, while show attendees watched. Angela thrived in the competitive environment of sewing-as-entertainment.

The year after she won the *Passion for Fashion* contest, Angela mounted an exhibit of her garments for the ASE ... and she became aware of something called the “*home sewing industry*.” Angela’s phone started ringing and the opportunities just kept coming. The home sewing industry welcomed Angela and her skills with open arms. At this point, Angela says her focus is on teaching and inspiring sewers and fashion designers of all ages; offering easy to follow patterns, online classes, and virtual classes for dealers, stores, and organizations. Angela has an active social media presence with free tutorials on her YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/user/aboapparel> and Facebook Live Shows, particularly the popular show *Behind the Scenes* that airs every Wednesday at 1:30PM EST <https://www.facebook.com/AngelaWolfCouture/> attracting thousands of viewers and fans.

Angela’s travel schedule is packed with dealer events, the Original Sewing & Quilt Expo, Quilt Festival, and taping new seasons of the PBS series *It’s Sew Easy*. You can find Angela’s activities or contact her at www.AngelaWolf.com.



Needle Points with Rhonda



Needle Anatomy

130/705 H*

- Butt:** The beveled end allows easy insertion in the needle bar.
- Shank:** Household needles have a flat shank, while commercial and industrial needles have round, threaded, notched or other special shanks. Shanks allow perfect positioning of the needle in the sewing machine.
- Shoulder:** The sloping area transitioning between the shank and blade. SCHMETZ color codes appear on the shoulder.
- Blade:** Needle size is determined by the blade diameter (i.e., size 75 is .75mm).
- Groove:** The groove cradles and guides thread to the eye. The length and size of the groove vary according to needle type.
- Scarf:** The indentation above the eye that allows the bobbin hook to smoothly grab the thread under the throat plate to create a stitch. The shape and size of the scarf vary according to needle type.
- Eye:** The hole through which thread passes. The shape and size of the eye vary according to needle type.
- Point & Tip:** Length, shape and size vary according to needle types.
- Needle Type:** Upper color band indicates needle type (i.e., Stretch).
- Size:** Lower color band indicates size (i.e., 75/11).



side view

*Needle system used by most home sewing machines.



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www.SCHMETZneedles.com

