



## Report from Solo Judge Maree Gebhardt

2021 was a different judging experience.

One judge, with three assistants. Each assistant has completed the Judging Education Program run by QuiltNSW.

With just 6 people (judge, assistants, scribe and handler) we were an efficient team, multi-tasking for two days. I found this to be a most enjoyable judging experience.

Congratulations to the exhibition sub-committee who have done so much planning for this virtual exhibition.

Quilts were photographed before being placed on the judging table so we had the opportunity to view to quilts hanging. The quiltmakers statement was read out, giving more detailed information about each quilt.

The Amateur pieced category was very strong this year.

- It was pleasing to see a large number of entries demonstrating a variety of techniques.
- Quiltmakers were creative with the fabrics resulting in very distinctive and interesting designs.
- I was impressed by the workmanship and the fabulous use of colour.

The Junior categories are always a surprise.

- I am so impressive to see how skilled these young quilters are.
- They have no fear and attempt complicated designs well beyond their years.
- They have confidence using domestic sewing machines as well as large quilting machines.
- I can't wait to see what they make next year.

Group quilts category was very impressive.

- A wonderful selection of very well-planned quilts that were beautifully pieced and finished.
- There was a great variety of traditional and original designs

- some were friendship blocks, while others were quilts made by group members experimenting with new techniques.
- This was a very interesting category to judge and congratulations to all group members who participated.

Domestic machine quilting both amateur and profession

- Guild members showed an outstanding ability to manipulate designs and control their machines, congratulations to all of these quilters.

### *What happens on judging day?*

Judging is a process of elimination where the judges consider many things -

- the visual impact
- the design
- colours
- degree of difficulty
- construction of quilt top
- quilting and finishing techniques

Quilts are progressively removed from the judging table leaving quilts that are visually appealing, showing a high degree of techniques, different styles and designs.

Judges have many categories to consider and access each quilt in relation to the category.

For example,

- Modern quilt category further consideration is given to the use of colour, minimal design elements and negative space
- art quilts consideration is given to original designs and the different techniques used to create an interesting and visually appealing quilts.

There are so many things a judge must consider – these are a few other areas a judge considers -

Does the quilt show good construction techniques?

Are tramlines, borders and design features even and straight or are they detracting from the design?

Does a piece of fabric look like a commercial print? Or is it perfectly cut fabric creating secondary patterns?

Are points accurate or are they chopped off?

Are curves smooth and or are they bumpy and become a distraction to the design

## Machine quilting

- tension front and back correct
- stitch length – is this consistent
- start and endings should not be obvious
- is there sufficient quilting across the entire quilt surface?

## Hand quilting

- are the stitches even and consistent across the quilt?
- stitches should be seen on the back?
- does the quilting design compliment the quilt?
- regardless of being fine hand quilting or big stitch quilting, consistent stitch length is important.

Finishing techniques are considered – borders, corners, bindings.

Quilts are then folded from the outer edge to the centre to ensure the length is accurate and the edges are not wavy - this confirms the quilt will hang well.

After considering all of these items the judge will identify a category winner.

From the category winners the Best of Show is selected.

### *What can you do to improve your quilt making?*

- Take time to measure accurately during the construction
- Use a camera or reducing glass to view your work from a distance before fully assembling the quilt top
- Check that your chosen fabrics work well within the design.
- Correct errors during construction, you don't be disappointed to see a problem after you have finished the quilt.
- Don't be afraid to unpick and resew
- Choose the correct binding technique and apply it correctly.

I hope these comments assist you with your quilting.

Enjoy the process, relax and have fun.

Thank you for inviting me to be a judge this year.

Maree Gebhardt