

The House Quilt Project

by Jamie Fingal, presented by Vivika Hansen DeNegre

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This house quilt by Rhonda Harris of Hood River, Oregon, has an African theme, which is continued on the backing with fabric featuring elephants and lions in the wild.



Jamie Fingal holds a quilt made for The House Quilt Project. Photo courtesy of the artist.

On this episode of “Quilting Arts TV,” Quilting Arts Magazine Editor Vivika Hansen DeNegre showed a selection of Heart of the Home quilts made and contributed by Quilting Arts readers to benefit The House Quilt Project. To better inform our viewers and readers about this project and its founder Jamie Fingal, we are reprinting portions of an article written by Jamie for the October/November 2018 issue.

Making a positive impact on my community is an important part of my personal philosophy and the impetus behind much of my artwork.

Several years ago I was looking for a way to give back to my community. While attending a Habitat for Humanity event, I had the pleasure of meeting Beth Phillips, the Founder and Executive Director of Furnishing Hope,

a charity whose mission is to facilitate healing, reduce stress, and encourage an overall feeling of security for families in need as they transition to independent living. Beth’s story and organization were inspiring: Furnishing Hope transforms empty spaces into peaceful and comfortable homes, complete with furniture, new mattresses, bedding, bathroom, and kitchenware for their clients. They accomplish this by partnering with reputable non-profits like Habitat for Humanity and government agencies such as military hospitals.

A light went on in my head: Why not organize a project where quilters could make house-themed wall quilts to be presented to the families serviced by Furnishing Hope? Who wouldn’t love to decorate their new home with a unique house quilt?

The House Quilt Project was then established. Our collaboration began in

2010 with a large project making quilts for families who moved into Habitat for Humanity homes. After those quilts were completed, we started phase 2 and made patriotic house quilts for veterans and wounded service members transitioning into residences. Overall, more than 300 unique house quilts were created and donated in this nation-wide effort. Imagine the impact these quilts have had on their recipients!

“This is so special. No matter where I go, or what I do, this will always hang in my home. It’s a reminder to me that there are people out there that care,” said Angela, one of the recipients.

The third phase of the project, Heart of the Home, began in 2017 and is ongoing. These quilts are for women and their children who have broken the cycle of homelessness. Some are recovering from trauma related to domestic violence and human trafficking. Furnishing Hope believes

the path to independence takes courage and determination, and supports them in many ways once they secure permanent housing.

How can you help?

Make a quilt! Heart of the Home wall quilts are made and donated by volunteers around the country and sent to me to be hand delivered to Furnishing Hope for distribution. These whimsical and cheerful quilts welcome the new family to the new chapter in their life. The quilts are all different and unique to each quilter. We all work in our own styles. There are a few requirements, however, to keep the project on track.

- **Size:** The quilts are all a uniform size, measuring 14" x 14"
- **Hanging device:** All wall quilts must have aluminum pop tops or rings sewn into the upper corners of each quilt for easy hanging
- **Labels:** All quilts should be labeled with The House Quilt Project, maker's name, city and state, Year, and "Do Not Wash."
- **Image:** Every quilt should be visually appealing, creative, and feature a house!

Making a small house quilt is a great way to experiment with new ideas, be creative with new techniques, and practice your free-motion machine

quilting. Most importantly, it is a way to give back to the community, to encourage families as they build a better life for themselves, and to share your love of color and creativity with a family in need. ■■

To learn more about Jamie's passion for these projects, visit thehousequiltproject.blogspot.com.

For more information about Furnishing Hope, visit furnishinghope.org.