

Guild Member Travel Award 2020 update

In the Summer 2022 issue of *The Quilter* (issue 171, pp.16–19), Annie Folkard shared her experiences of the online workshops she took using some of her Guild Member Travel Award 2020 bursary. Usually, the bursary is to be used to attend an international event but, as we all know, COVID-19 put overseas travel on hold. Annie's original intention had been to put her winnings towards a visit to the USA to attend a Nancy Crow workshop. In April this year, her plan came to fruition, and here Annie tells us how it went.



I set off from the UK to Columbus, Ohio, USA on 29 April 2022. The long-anticipated workshop with Nancy Crow had finally arrived – I had been due to attend in October 2021.

Set in delightful countryside, the Crow Timber Frame Barn is a rural idyll surrounded by hundreds of mature trees that have been planted by the Crows. The converted barn/workshop building was decorated from floor to ceiling with objects collected during years of overseas travel. There was so much visual stimulus and inspiration on show.

Twenty-two students were in the class I took – Nancy's 'Strip-Piecing and Restructuring' workshop. We all fitted into the Barn comfortably and were each provided with a generous workspace. The atmosphere was welcoming and the workshop well structured. Nancy's notes were brilliant (no photographs, and you have to handwrite your own notes). After each session of note-taking and questions, we got straight down to the next step.

During the day Nancy walked around the studio and asked the question, 'Pass or talk?'. This enabled her to see how work was progressing and advise as required. The one time I didn't 'Pass' and decided to 'Talk' the answer I got was, 'I don't know, you'll just have to try for yourself to see'.

The whole creative vibe was electric. 'Don't worry about cutting up all your expensive fabrics and failing', Nancy interjected to the group. 'You have to be brave and work with your intuition and creative self. Let yourself go! Be wild, be free!'

I found it liberating. It's certainly not for the faint-hearted though, as Nancy piles it on and there was hardly a chance to stop

and breathe. But hearing the words 'You've nailed it' after one of the first composition exercises brought a smile to my face. There was no doubt in my mind that I 'got' what Nancy was after. And I didn't mind starting at 7am and leaving at 9pm to keep up. It was essential to work at pace – there was no chance to dither or procrastinate.

Nancy imparted tips and tricks about strip-piecing and restructuring; about shape, line and value; whether bright, glowing, relative or flat; which grey did it match in terms of value?; when is a line a figure or a shape?; what comes forward, what goes to the back?; how to create visual texture ...

Nancy's approach suited me. I picked up so much – and also enjoyed lots of laughs – and returned home inspired to build on what I had learnt. In fact, less than a week after getting home, I had created a proper design wall as big as my sewing space (with some reorganisation) could accommodate.

Nancy told me that prior to my arrival she had the impression I was an anxious old lady, concerned about travel, so she was relieved to find this was not so. She also told me to tell The Quilters' Guild who had generously awarded me my bursary: 'They should consider it was money well spent'. I already miss the energy and can't wait to go back for more. I'm delighted to report that it was definitely worth the wait, and I give my thanks to everyone involved.

Annie Folkard

On page 4 you will find details of how to apply for the Guild Member Travel Award 2022.



Bottom left:
Annie freehand-cutting strip pieces.

Bottom right:
Annie making her final presentation.

Right:
Nancy Crow.



IMAGES COURTESY ANNIE FOLKARD AND NANCY CROW