

#1- In which way have the Internet, and especially Facebook changed your life as a textile artist [pros & cons]?

My life as a textile artist changed after I went online with Bloomfelt.com. In fact shortly after Filz Fun contacted me to ask me to write an article which gave me exposure to many textile artists.

Because of the Internet's ease and speed of communication I received requests to do many workshops, including some in Europe. It also increased the demand for workshops in my studio and led to a two week teaching session at a college in the province of Alberta.

So all this recognition had a snowball effect and the success made me feel good and less isolated. It also made me realize that with the traveling and consequent absences from my studio I have had to work much harder and ration my time better.

The website exposure led to writing more articles for various magazines and with that feedback I was able to think and feel more deeply about my work.

I am very grateful for the increased opportunity to do workshops and teaching, especially if it helps people to be more creative.

I do not have Facebook and I don't spend much time on the net, but I always answer people who write me personally. But I do not do Blogs and hardly ever read them.

I prefer books or magazines. It is more intimate without all the links to other subjects or advertising. Today we know a little about a lot which might seem to stimulate creativity but makes for shallow thinking. In short I prefer working with my hands to spending time in front of a screen.

#2-Why do you think people "steal" ideas of others? Is there a solution to the problem?

I would only consider taking someone's idea as "stealing" if it were done for material profit.

This would not involve any creativity on the part of the "thief" but only the motivation to copy, or partly copy and then put it on the market for monetary gain, thus outright "theft". But if someone were sufficiently interested in one of my ideas to copy it or adapt and adopt it to stimulate their own creativity I would have absolutely no problem with that.

What I do have a problem with is the immediacy and glibness of Internet use. Someone produces something, immediately photographs it and posts it online where it acquires some seal of approval simply by appearing there.

And I'm afraid that real creativity could be watered down to appeal to a greater number of people and in the process strangle itself. After all many crafts have been displaced by technology in just a couple of generations. Technology is unstoppable and I would not be surprised if you could bring the smell of wool into your living room at the push of a button in the very near future.

But I'm confident that technology won't be able to replicate the feel of natural fiber running through my fingers. And that's my inspiration and that one cannot copy or "steal".

In the end it is a matter of individual conscience where you draw the line between "stealing" and borrowing. After all if we had not taken someone's idea and developed it we would still be cutting up our food with flint knives and eating it with our fingers off the ground.

#3 What are your personal experiences with infringement of copyright? And which consequences do you draw from them?

I have no personal experience with infringement of copyright as I have not felt any need for copyrighting my work up to this point. Nor do I see the need for or the feasibility of it.

The creative world is an ocean of ideas in which the waves are differentiated but all meld into a constantly shifting mass. To single out any one idea as uniquely yours is probably deceptive. As they say there is nothing new in the universe. But you can appropriate your gut instinct decision to select something that stands out at that moment, and let your creative impulses walk away with it.

Maybe that same thing happened to someone yesterday, or it will happen tomorrow and all of us are working in our various creative ways toward a similar goal. Perhaps where I can take the lead is by wanting to share it, by posting it on the Internet, by teaching and giving workshops.

I understand the need for copyright laws in the fields of for instance publishing and music. But these constraints tend to replace morality with legality and greed will always find a loophole. I prefer to trust and to surrender myself to the ocean of creativity.

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