HORSE SHOW RIBBON ART

Many have seen the pillows and quilts Diana creates using clients' prized horse show ribbons in combination with custom embroideries, medals, photos, and even wreaths using the rosettes that may have gone unused in the quilt or pillow project. It has been several years since her first commission when a horse show mother contacted her after seeing the caliber of Diana's work at the annual ELIQG Peconic Quilt Show at Suffolk Community's Riverhead Campus. Terry didn't want her daughter's accomplishments stuffed in forgotten boxes but wanted to preserve these memories in an heirloom format and present it to her daughter as a gift for graduation. Diana wasn't sure if she wanted to take the responsibility with these treasured awards but agreed to get back to her. She researched and inquired everywhere to find anything out about creating one and found there was absolutely no information to be found. Diana accepted the challenge and continues to exclusively design and create each custom one of a kind piece of art to be proudly displayed for all to see.

One of many horse-themed quilts Diana creates for her clients.

Ribbons arrive from everywhere including Arizona, California, Canada, Connecticut, Florida, Maryland, Rhode Island, Virginia, and of course, New York to name a few. Inquires come from many sources and are welcomed via e-mail and by phone. E-mail communications can be exchanged at any hour; details are recorded accurately, and up dates can be sent throughout the entire process from sketch to the finished piece. During the commission process, updates are sent via e-mail with a photo upon completion. A personal conversation helps to answer questions, brings up new questions, and allows design possibilities to grow as ideas are exchanged. Diana encourages prospective clients to make an appointment and visit her state of the art studio where one can see the quality of Diana's work as well as the conditions where she works. All details are recorded in a binder and the materials stored in its own separate plastic bin. A color ribbon inventory and other items provided along with the desires of the client (embroidered quotes, etc...) are used for the basis of each design.

With this information and her natural talent for design and technical experience to execute it, she creates a colored sketch, complete with all the details including cost and a time frame, which is submitted for approval before the actual work begins. Each quilt bears a custom embroidered appliqué with the rider's name, horse's name, year, and a small message to the recipient if it is given as a gift. These embroideries are incorporated into the design itself in golden thread which enhances the ribbon imprints.

There are no surprises with the cost because a quilt is by definition a pieced top, with a batting sandwiched in between the top and a backing, and finished with a binding. A pocket is stitched onto the back to hand that it can be displayed as soon as it arrives home. All these details are included in the price and are not charged in addition to. Another important consideration, especially if one is intended for a gift for a birthday, graduation, holiday etc. is to plan well in advance since these are made in the order of the commissions. This is how Diana is able to provide such high quality workmanship and a long list of testimonials from very satisfied customers which can be viewed on her website, *www.distincitivedesignsbydiana.com*.

The recipients are also diverse as they are for young junior riders, those who have completed their junior years and going off to college, gifts from trainers to special students, riders for owners, and some are a collection of a lifetime of an individual or farm. It is always interesting to see how different and absolutely beautiful the awards are from different regions of the country. No two are ever the same and they get better and better.

A graduate of the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City, Diana is a successful fashion designer and award winning artist and quilt designer, an active member of several well known local and national quilt guilds and art associations, has owned and loved horses for many years, and has combined her two outstanding interests, design and horses, in the making of these artful quilts. Throughout the year, she continues to exhibit her art and quilts at variety of shows, including juried shows, here on Long Island, New York City, and Pennsylvania. Last summer, one of her quilts which has won numerous awards and was originally submitted for the Hampton Classic Poster Committee for their 30th Anniversary, was exhibited at the Long Island Museums at Stony Brook who is affiliated with the Smithsonian. Award winning quilts from her private collection are offered for sale as matted and framed giclees or notecards.