

Karey and Nancy, Thank you never seems like enough but, thank for the impact you have had on my life and thank you for the honor of choosing my quilt for this incredible award.

A very special thank you to those online friends who chose to read what I had to share on my blog way back in 2009 and pushed me to create this quilt. After posting a picture from a recent workshop project I had taught way back then, which was the Wren, they asked me if I would design an entire quilt made up of different birds. Under well intentioned pressure, I gave in and agreed.

Naturalist's Notebook was made over a span of nine years. But...The time I actually spent making this quilt could be consolidated down to one year. So basically, this quilt was finished about eight years over schedule. I jokingly referred to this project as a "Mystery Block of the Year".

It was a mystery to them and a mystery to me what path the finished design would take as they patiently followed the progress from block to block online and along with me.

The design inspiration for the individual block designs came from some of the flora and fauna of the places I have visited on my international teaching travels and also what I observed in my own garden in the beautiful Pacific Northwest.

During those teaching travels, I have met so many people that I now call friends and in some cases, they have become my second family. It was those personal connections I wanted to impart into the design as tangible memories of the experiences I had in countries other than my own.

The technical challenge set with this quilt was to get the same illustrative result using only commercial fabrics and thread to mimic what I achieve when I am illustrating with watercolors. (There is no paint used on this quilt)

Naturalist's Notebook was a means to stretch my creativity and employ my preferred technique of needleturn applique and hand embroidery as a substitute for my paintbrush from block to block.

In a way I have come full circle thanks to my community of quilting friends. I created an illustrated booklet of birds at the age of seven that won an art show award and now, here I am again, only with quilted illustrations of birds, standing at the most prestigious international quilting competition as a recipient of the prestigious Founder's Award.

Thank you IQA