

On the Book Shelf

HOMAGE TO AMANDA, TWO HUNDRED YEARS OF AMERICAN QUILTS by Edwin Binney III and his daughter, Gail Binney Winslow. 96 pgs. RK Press, Dept 22, 955 Fourteenth St S F CA 94114, \$16.95 + \$1.50
Note: It is also a SITES traveling exhibit of quilts from the authors' collection.

Reviewed by Bets Ramsey

HOMAGE TO AMANDA is a guide to the collection (and exhibition) and contains a lively text highlighting the quiltmakers and changing aspects of the art. Published by Michael Kile, the co-founder of THE QUILT DIGEST, the book had the same high quality format and photography of the DIGEST series.

The book gives not only a selective overview of American quilting, but allows the reader to experience the growth of a collection formed by historical study and personal taste. One senses the commitment to the best artistic standards and refinement of choice. There is a graciousness, too, in the collectors sharing their acquisitions so willingly with other quilt lovers through their exhibition and book.

This fine volume deserves to be placed on the shelf with your best art books.

This article was originally published in the CHATTANOOGA TIMES, Jan 24 1985 and is printed with permission.

Reviewed by Joyce Gross

The choice of quilts, the photography and excellent printing (even the quilting is clearly visible) make this an important book, but I was even more impressed with the text. It includes not only a description of the quilt (plus a full color photograph) but adds some bit of background information which helps the reader have a better understanding of that quilt and adds to her general knowledge of quilting history.

For example, the text with the "Pineapple" quilt on pg 47, reads, "It is said that American sea captains, returning from the tropics, brought back exotic fruits, among them pineapples. They impaled them on their gate and fence posts to herald their return from the sea. Whether this is folklore or fact, the pineapple has served as a symbol of hospitality and goodwill in Western culture for centuries. America's leading cabinetmakers utilized the pineapple as finial and bas-relief decorations, and needleworkers incorporated the motif into their creations."

SCHEDULE FOR "AMANDA" Aug 24-Oct 6 '85 Midland Art Council, Midland, Michigan
Oct 26-Dec 8 '85 Allentown Art Museum, Allentown, Pennsylvania
Dec 28-Apr 13 '86 Museum of Folk Art, Santa Fe, New Mexico

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Mrs Roosevelt gave it as a gift since it has been documented that she gave another quilt to a servant as a remembrance of the White House years and there are stories about her giving other souvenirs to friends and employees.

The pattern for the prize-winning quilt was reproduced in many publications and sold by several pattern companies. Since the piecing design was a traditional pattern going back to the early nineteenth century there were no copyright restrictions on it. Stearns and Foster apparently bought the rights to reproduce the quilt exactly and use Miss Caden's name. They have sold the pattern for decades as the "Star of the Bluegrass" and credit it as an original design by Margaret Rogers Caden. The pattern copyrighted 1948, includes the same stuffed work (or "tra-punta" as they call it) seen in the photos of the quilt and in Mattie Black's border samples.

Helen Black has recently had some of Mattie Black's tops quilted. Two finished by Carol Ann White are pictured in LADIES CIRCLE PATCHWORK QUILTS, Spring, 1983, with a cryptic caption about the World's Fair contest mystery.

Margaret Caden and her sisters died many years ago. She left no children to give her version of the World's Fair winner story. Until more evidence surfaces--we can hope the quilt will someday be found--the story is still a mystery, but the rumors in Lexington that Mattie Clark Black (who received none of the cash and none of the credit) was the country's top quiltmaker in 1933 seem to have the ring of truth about them.

For a photo of Margaret Rogers Caden and the quilt that won the Grand National Prize see page 21.

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Compiled by Joyce Gross July 1985

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*no date **no source

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POLITICAL & CAMPAIGN QUILTS" catalogue from 1984 exhibit in Frankfort KY. Photos and descriptions of 30 quilts from museums and private collections. \$7.50 + \$1.50 post & handl. Kentucky Heritage Quilt Society. P O Box 23392, Lexington KY 40503.

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