

Forensic Knitting: Tools and Techniques for Inquiring Minds *a workshop with Cat Bordhi*

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Dates: Saturday, July 23 and Sunday, July 24, 8:30 am to 11:30 am and 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm

Location: Fibers in Motion (Multnomah Village), 7855 Southwest Capitol Highway, Portland, OR

Cost: \$200 To reserve a spot, contact Lisa Carney-Fenton at lisa@handworksnw.com or 503-244-9058



Appropriate skill levels: If you can, without supervision, knit flat and in the round, work decreases, increases, yarn-overs and cables, and have a relentlessly curious mind, you are ripe for this workshop. If you're one of the ten most advanced knitters in history, you're ripe for this workshop. We'll be mining what appears to me to be an infinite vein of beautiful possibilities, and the key is to come with a willingness to see what you may not have seen before, and follow it like a happy bloodhound.

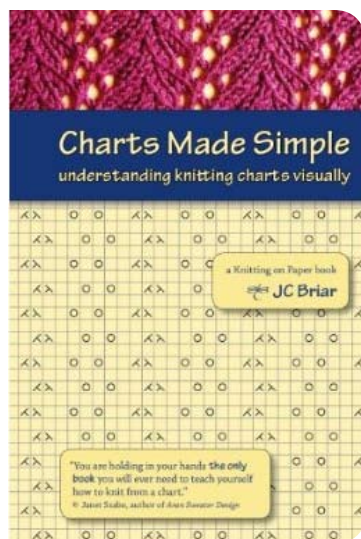
Description:

If you are a curious knitter who likes to stray from a pattern to explore alternatives, you'll enjoy having Cat guide you towards supremely fruitful ways of straying into new worlds. This class draws from the body of techniques that form the foundation of her Institute of Forensic Knitting, which will launch three consecutive freshman classes (all full, sorry) this fall on San Juan Island, Washington.

Day 1: We'll spend the day examining and reverse-engineering some of Cat's library of uncommon swatches. The ultimate goal is not to accurately reproduce them and "get it right," although that is acceptable; but to be fortunate enough to misinterpret a challenging texture and in so doing land in new, related territory. The best swatches have been misinterpreted in so many ways that they seem to be on fertility drugs. Cat will also bring out her as yet unpublished *Knitting Morpheme Cards*, and teach you how to use them to generate unique textures. As the day proceeds, your fear of the unknown will transform into a longing for the mystery and pleasure and gifts that arise from not knowing, and your grasp of the underpinnings of knitting and ability to use diagnostic tools will grow exponentially. In order to preserve the fruits of your explorations, you will be required to record as you knit. You will also learn to articulate principles that emerge from your work, and to define variables, then to seek and list possibilities for each variable, so that the principles produce countless variations. If this sounds like math, it is; but math in its truest form: pattern, movement, relationship, dimension, and beauty. (If you fear math, don't worry; what you fear is not needed here.)

Day 2: Bring a generic pattern for any garment or accessory you are fond of; a sort of blank canvas on which to paint your textures (consider Barbara Walker's *Knitting From the Top*, or one of Ann Budd's *Knitter's Handy Books*, or simply bring any pattern from which you can strip the texture). Once you are ready (you are also free to continue exploring and inventing new textures; I will encourage you to follow your heart's longing), you will distill your discoveries in order to marry them to your chosen garment or accessory. You'll sketch, swatch, consult with others, make paper or fabric models, map out possibilities, draw schematics, begin to write a pattern, and possibly begin knitting your new design. We will also spend a bit of time discussing copyright issues and how to write clear, concise, and consistent patterns. And finally off you will go, with more questions than you came with (which is a good thing), new friends who share your passion, and a whole new world of tools and possibilities and freedom to explore fresh and beautiful ways of manipulating loops.

Supplies: The usual small bag of knitting supplies, a variety of yarns with good stitch definition (ie, they show textures especially well and are easy to read and work with), in plain or shaded solids (hand paints obscure textures, although you may want to bring some to see how they show up in a new texture, or if you are particularly interested in color work) with appropriate needles, including needles that allow you to knit in the round; graph paper, scissors capable of cutting both paper and fabric, tape, colored pencils, a mechanical pencil, a good eraser, a magnifying glass, several old cotton knit T-shirts (thrift store) or some cheap cotton knit yardage, a sewing needle and thread, a stitch dictionary with charted patterns, and if you like, any design inspirations you may have collected: photos, woven fabric, leaves, etc. You might bring a laptop to begin writing out your pattern, or a good old-fashioned notebook. For day 2, a generic pattern for any garment or accessory you are fond of; a sort of blank canvas on which to paint your textures (consider Barbara Walker's *Knitting From the Top*, or Ann Budd's *Knitter's Handy Books*, or simply bring any pattern from which you can strip the texture).



Homework: Please buy, read, and digest *Charts Made Simple—understanding knitting visually*, by JC Briar, ahead of time—this small jewel of a book is illuminating and user-friendly, and once you have digested it, you will be a wiser, more confident and more conscious knitter, and will be ready to record your discoveries and map out new possibilities more easily.