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Review of *Texas Quilts and Quilters: A Lone Star Legacy* By Marcia Kaylakie with Janice Whittington

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Texas Quilts and Quilters: A Lone Star Legacy. By Marcia Kaylakie with Janice Whittington. Photography by Jim Lincoln. Foreword by Marian Ann J. Montgomery. Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2007. xix + 241 pp. Photographs, index. \$39.95.

This beautiful book showcases thirty-four Texas quilts, selected by Marcia Kaylakie from the hundreds she saw in public and private collections during a decade of documenting quilts throughout the state of Texas. It is a visual delight that adds to the body of work on Texas quilts and quiltmakers. Marion Ann Montgomery's foreword helps set the book in context. Janice Whittington worked with Kaylakie to shape the interesting human stories behind the quilts. We learn that a simple Dutch Doll quilt became known as "The Sick Quilt," as a mother entertained her ill children with stories about each doll. We can delight that a quilt sharing of a 1930s signed friendship quilt in the small town of Ralls brought forth more than forty other quilts made by the same circle of friends.

Jim Lincoln's photographs of the quilts, both overall views and clear details, are outstanding. The striking Blue Lone Star quilt, featured on a ranch fence with Blue Mountain in the background, dramatically illustrates how the quilts in this book reflect the rich and varied landscape of the Great Plains and life in the small towns and rural areas of Texas. Wonderful black-and-white vintage photographs of people and places connected to the quilts also enhance the book.

Kaylakie clearly makes her point that Texas quiltmakers were aware of national trends but also used "their own vision and put it on the canvas of the quilt." Nine early quilts, 1870s to 1920s, include an appliqué quilt featuring a Mexican Eagle atop a cactus plant and an elaborate crazy quilt with a dominate Lone Star State block. Eleven quilts made in the 1930s demonstrate the creativity of quiltmakers during trying times. They personalized commercial patterns with Texas touches such as cattle brands and local feedsack fabrics. Nine

quilts from the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s reveal the continued grassroots interest in making quilts that reflected family and community life in the Great Plains. Five wonderful contemporary quilts, including a Lone Star quilt made by the mother of the Texas governor, remind readers that the quilting tradition continues to flourish in Texas.

Overall, the chosen quilts reflect the challenges and joys of life in the Great Plains. Texas quiltmakers recycled tobacco pouches and oil field maps and made images in crayons and colored pencils. They shaped small scraps

of cotton and wool into striking string, postage stamp, and utility quilts. They incorporated motifs of the landscape, including cotton, cattle brands, rainbows, and butterflies. They made quilts to celebrate family and friends and to “tie people together with memories and caring.” Kaylakie’s choices can inspire others to look in-depth at how the sense of place influences both process and product.

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