

Hope Davis Wood

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I began working with fabric and stitch and acrylic paint in 2021. In the fall of that year, my dear dog Max was diagnosed with heart failure and I was advised to keep him as quiet and inactive as possible. I knew we would be sitting by the fire all season so I looked for a project to do in my chair while I was keeping vigil. I chanced upon the art of slow stitching. This is a meditative process that encourages unplanned expression with a needle and thread. Think of doodling. It embraces raw edges and upcycled scraps of fabric.

I sat and snipped and pinned and stitched that whole season from fall into winter. The process was all that was promised. It was indeed a healing meditation, and I found calmness and meaning while I explored the deep connection we form with our beloved dogs.

I thought I would stop when I lost my Max but I found I could not...would not. So now I stitch my wild puppy, Ziggy, and I also find great delight in stitching portraits of other dogs and sometimes their humans.

In the past several months I have moved on to the Green Man, a favorite icon of mine that caught my imagination when I was young. He is the embodiment of nature and the cycle of growth and rebirth...a guardian of the wild places. I piece and stitch them around my hand painted faces from bits of fabric that I cut from old clothing and tablecloths and remnants I find. Each Green Man is a unique piece.

