

July 26, 2022

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See Ken Burns' quilt collection at The Great Wisconsin Quilt Show, Sept. 8-10 in Madison

America's storyteller – documentary filmmaker Ken Burns – has collected handmade quilts since the 1970s. On loan from his private collection, “Uncovered: The Ken Burns Collection” showcases 26 historic American quilts, dating from the 1850s to the 1940s. This exhibit of delicate artifacts not only tells stories from our history but shares the spirit of people who lived it.

Visitors can enjoy this exhibit at the 2022 Great Wisconsin Quilt Show, Sept. 8-10 at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison. This is the first and only currently scheduled Wisconsin exhibition of “Uncovered,” which celebrates quilting as part of our identity, blending the importance of art and history.

“You know the great arrogance we in the present feel is that because we are alive, survived, that we somehow know more than the people in the past,” Burns said in a PBS Wisconsin interview. “And it's just not true. So we honor the past when you realize that there have been people for, you know, 10,000 years who have had conversations as complex, indeed much more complex and nuanced than the one you and I are having.

“Everybody's grappling with essential questions of who am I and what am I here for? Quilts are essential, in that they do keep people warm. That's an important problem. But the fact that they quickly got elevated to something more than just keeping people warm is just a perfect example of human striving. When you do something else to it, it's art. Tolstoy said that art was the transfer of emotion for one person to another. Well, these quilts make me feel things profoundly.”

Visit quiltshow.com to purchase event tickets and to find full event details now.

Presented by PBS Wisconsin and Nancy Zieman Productions, The Great Wisconsin Quilt Show is the ultimate adventure for quilt enthusiasts of all skill levels.

“Uncovered: The Ken Burns Collection” is organized by the International Quilt Museum, University of Nebraska—Lincoln.

For the first time in three years, The Great Wisconsin Quilt Show will return to the Alliant Energy Center in Madison, Wisconsin as an in-person event, welcoming quilters from across Wisconsin and throughout the United States to join together and share their love for quilting.

Now in its 18th year, The Great Wisconsin Quilt Show's main attraction is the 10-category juried and judged Quilt Contest exhibit, showcasing the incredible talents of quilters from across the country. Featured quilts range from traditional sizes and shapes to innovative pictorial quilts.

The Great Wisconsin Quilt Show features additional quilt exhibits as well as dozens of educational lectures and workshops led by expert quilters; shopping opportunities from trusted vendors, featuring the latest fabrics and notions; and a community service project — Quilt to Give — in which attendees donate their materials and skills to create quilts for those in need.

Event organizers will continue to monitor updates from health officials regarding COVID-19 safety guidelines and will share the latest information about their protocols at quiltshow.com.

The Great Wisconsin Quilt Show is presented by PBS Wisconsin and Nancy Zieman Productions. Proceeds from The Great Wisconsin Quilt Show support PBS Wisconsin programs and community outreach projects.

Thank you to our Premier Event Sponsors: Husqvarna Viking Sewing Machines and Pfaff Sewing Machines. Additional thanks to our Associate Event Sponsors: Ana's Sewing Studio, BERNINA of America, Blue Bar Quilts, Brother International Sewing Corporation, Janome, Juki America, Inc. and Linda Z's Sewing Center.

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