

*Brandon Mably; a positive force just “Giving it a go!”*

So, you walk into a room that feels like an exotic market from the Middle East. Different patterned carpets cover the bare floorboards. Large baskets of yarn are piled high. Painted chest of drawers store colorful knit wear and patchwork quilts. Asian ceramics are stacked high on top of cupboards and shelves. Brandon Mably, Rowan artist under the Kaffe Collective banner, describes in vivid detail his first visit to Kaffe Fassett’s studio; a visit in which he knew he wanted to be part of this colorful, eclectic world.

Fifteen years later, Brandon is the manager of Kaffe’s studio and an artist in his own right. His path has been one inspired, not by a formal certificate, but by a rich, creative environment, a love for art and color plus encouragement from the “Armani” of the knit and quilting world, Kaffe himself.

“Kaffe is the ultimate teacher, never squelching out of the box thinking but always pushing you to try what your heart desires,” says Brandon. “Kaffe says ‘just give it a go, you won’t know until you try’ and from this I have found my place in the world of yarn and fabric.”

That encouragement found Brandon publishing his first knit design six months after walking into Kaffe’s Studio. Knitting, a profession unto itself, allows Brandon to play with colors, seeing the intensity and effect colors have when placed next to each other or the subtly of how colors can “tickle” a collection; like sweet lime with soft blues or hot red combined with chocolate brown.

“The idea of knitting a beige sweater is like swimming through a bowl of cold porridge. Knitting lets me play with colors and helps to give birth to fabric ideas which grow organically,” says Brandon.

Every fabric design, once sketched and proportioned, is hand painted by Brandon. The excitement comes when the actual fabric can be cut up, placed next to other and arranged into a large scale quilt. It is amazing to see, according to Brandon, how his jazzy style fits so wonderfully with Kaffe’s lush floral and Philip Jacob’s chintz fabrics; thus forming the Kaffe Collective.

Besides designing and knitting, Brandon is an active participant in the Rowan P & Q books series which recently just released Quilts in Sweden. In addition to designing quilts for the series, he also is a viable part of the production team helping to investigate exotic locations for featuring the quilts and working diligently with their photographer of 20 years, Debbie Patterson, to shoot all the quilts for a book in two days.

Also, Brandon loves to be amongst quilter’s and yarn enthusiasts by hosting workshops all around the world. “It is the most rewarding experience. We are encouragers, not teachers, and I love to share with folks where I have come simply by being encouraged to try. It’s the most powerful experience,” says Brandon.

