

Hello,

I am Menolda Bakker from the Netherlands, my art is the creation of fine custom hats.

My professional background includes an engineering degree in textile design. When I happened to run into hats, I was fascinated by them at once. I started studying the history of hats and trained in the craft of millinery until I was able to design and make fine custom hats myself.

The fascination with hats lies within their history and universality. Ever since mankind has used available materials to be protected from heat or cold, hats have been an essential, but also decorative part of their outfit. Hats have been worn all over the world for so long, yet there seems to be no end to their diversity. I encountered and was fascinated by hats on travels through Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas.



I have traveled into the East along the ancient Silk Road through Iran and Afghanistan and went to the West of South-America to see the straw weavers of Monte Christi in Ecuador, where the well-known Panamas are still made by hand. On my travels, I love to discover this wonderful variety of hats and bring home high quality material. Assimilating all these impressions and materials, I express my creativity by turning every hat into a wearable unique piece of art.

My history with hats has always emphasized quality, art and solid craftsmanship. I learned the techniques and little secrets of the making of fine custom hats in a two-year apprenticeship in a well-known milliners shop close to the city of Frankfurt. With encouragement from my customers and my peers I felt ready to open up my own hat-business, "Atelier Obhut", in the North of Germany. Since 1997 it has been very successful and so just this year I plucked up enough courage to venture the big jump over the ocean to bring my craft and business to the United States.

With my creativity and craft I would like to bring fashionable European-style hats of excellent quality to America. Some of the hats that I am showing here won prizes at the big CPD-fashion shows in Duesseldorf, Germany. It is a nice feeling to know that my designs have made some contribution to the great diversity of hats in the world.

EDUCATION and EXPERIENCE

- 1973-1978 Received engineering degree from the Fachhochschule fuer Design in Kiel-Germany with additional studies at the University of Kiel in Islamic Art and Archeology. This included travel along the Silk Route in Iran and Afganistan.
- 1981-1987 Lived and worked in Italy, Tunesia, Tanzania, studying local textile design and techniques.
- 1989-1991 Studied Orientalistic and Islamic Art at the University of Kiel with emphasis on textiles.
- 1993-1996 Work and apprenticeship as a milliner in Frankfurt, Germany.
1996 First Prize for best apprentice on the Igedo Exposition in Duesseldorf.
- 1997-2003 Established my own millinery "Atelier Obhut" in the North of Germany. Organization and management of different art and craft shows. Cooperated with the German Television on doing reports about hat fashions, modistes and the old craft and long tradition of millinery. Traveled to Ecuador and several European countries to study the local history and techniques for hat making.
- 2001-2002 Participated in all semi-annual CPD-Igedo Fashion Expositions in Duesseldorf-Germany and was awarded prizes at each show.
- Oct. 2003 – July 2004 Moving Atelier "Obhut" to Northern New Mexico.
- July 2004 – Present Atelier Obhut LLC established in New Mexico.