

## Press Release

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### French-Danish couple won the Spirit & Strength international quilt competition

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[www.vsmgroup.com](http://www.vsmgroup.com) and on  
[www.husqvarnaviking.com](http://www.husqvarnaviking.com)  
This also contains other  
press information.

**Inge Mardal and Steen Hougs won the Spirit & Strength international quilt competition against stiff competition comprising textile artists from 15 countries. The couple were recently awarded their first prize of a sewing machine worth around 50,000 Swedish kronor, Swedish glass sculpture by artist Bertil Vallien and 2,500 US dollars at a ceremony at the Houston International Quilt Festival, the world's largest quilt fair.**

"In just a few years, quilting has developed rapidly as an art form. It is becoming more and more high-tech and has little in common with what we in everyday language call quilts," says Lill Nylén, sewing expert and PR Officer for the VSM Group, one of the principal sponsors of the fair and promoter of Spirit & Strength.

With just over 60,000 visitors, Houston International Quilt Festival is the world's biggest quilt fair and in a class by itself. "Husqvarna Viking Gallery of Quilt Art" is the fair's main exhibition. On display were the 50 finalist quilts from the Spirit & Strength competition. The winners of the Quilt Art category were Inge Mardal and Steen Hougs with their butterfly-depicting artistic quilt, "Admirable Admiral". The couple originally hail from Denmark but now live in France. Kazuko Funabasama from Japan won the traditional class with her creation, "Millennium Star". The winners each received a cheque of 2,500 US dollars, an ultramodern Designer 1 sewing machine and a glass sculpture. The prizes were presented by VSM Group's CEO, Svante Runnquist.

The quilts will now tour the world starting in the USA. They will be on show at Europe's biggest quilt fair in the Hague in April next year.



Photos of the winning quilts and the other 46 finalist quilts can be downloaded from [www.husqvarnaviking.com](http://www.husqvarnaviking.com)