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## Professional Advice

# Building an Art Career

By Amy Robertson, SAQA PAM Member  
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**H**ow do you turn your passion for making art quilts into a career? That was the premise of the panel discussion held at the South Shore Arts Center in Cohasset, Mass., on October 18, 2005. Sponsored by the SAQA Massachusetts and Rhode Island Region, "Piecing it Together: Building a Career as a Quilt Artist," brought together panelists Sylvia Einstein, Jeanne Williamson, and Beverly Fine with Gywned Trefethen, SAQA's representative for the Massachusetts and Rhode Island region, as moderator. Held at SSAC during the "Piecing it Together" exhibition, 45 attendees were treated to an hour-long round table discussion of professional development issues. (See Review of "Piecing it Together" on page 27 of the Fall 2005 SAQA Journal.)

Although no step-by-step plan for career success was provided, participants were able to learn through the anecdotal information shared by the three panelists.

The panelists explained how they chose quilting as their medium of expression. Born and educated in Switzerland, Sylva Einstein came to the U.S. in 1965 and made her first quilt during the bicentennial-inspired quilt revival of the 1970s. Good feedback on her first quilt was all she needed to encourage her to continue with the medium. She has exhibited internationally for 30 years and teaches in the U.S. and Europe.

Jeanne Williamson has a master's degree in Art Education from Massachusetts College of Art and B.F.A. in Fibers/Crafts from Philadelphia College of Art. She makes quilts because she loves fabric. She creates whole-cloth art quilts, incorporating hand-printed textures of construction fences, hand-stamped shapes, and painting. Her "Orange Construction Fence Series #29" was recently chosen Best of Show at Quilt National 2005.

Beverly Fine is a National Quilting Association Certified Judge, juror, curator, and lecturer. She is drawn to quilting

See "Art Career" on page 28



Participants in "Piecing it Together: Building a Career as a Quilt Artist" listen as panelists Sylvia Einstein, Jeanne Williamson, Beverly Fine, and moderator Gywned Trefethen discuss the business of art quilting.

# Thoughts from the SAQA President

by Katie Pasquini Masopust  
www.katiepm.com



**W**hat a great year 2005 was for SAQA and for me. I turned 50 and SAQA turned 16, a fair number of years for both! I was presented with the Silver Star Award by Karey

Bresenhan and the International Quilt Association. What an honor: a lifetime achievement award in my chosen field. I was humbled by the experience and enjoyed the honor with many of my family and friends cheering me on. I look forward to whatever comes next. I am inspired to do my best for the art quilt movement through my own artwork and the work that I can do as president of this fine organization.

We have been growing by leaps and bounds through our increased membership and the increased opportunities for showing our excellent artwork in the various exhibitions we are putting on around the globe. I am especially excited about the great NoHo exhibition we have put on and the wonderful responses we are getting from the media in the fine art world. I want to thank Marilyn Henrion for all of her hard work spearheading this venture, "Exposed!" She helped expose our art to the New York art scene as well as the people from national magazines that reported on the exhibition.

At the time of this writing, we are waiting to see the outcome of the exhibition. I am sure that it will be very positive and help put us on the map. It will help all of us. At the close of the exhibition, Marilyn will be retiring from the board. She will be spending more time on her artwork,

and we wish her well. I learned a lot from Marilyn and will continue to work hard to have SAQA uphold the directive of creating excellence in the medium of textiles through our concerted efforts to exhibit our art in museums and galleries. 2006 is ahead of us, and I hope that we will all keep working and thinking of ways to bring the art quilt to the world.

We do have an important announcement: Janome is becoming a new sponsor, both as a flagship sponsor, sponsoring an important exhibit in a "gallery-type" setting at the Houston International Quilt Festival 2006, and as a Platinum Corporate Sponsor making a generous donation to the organization as a whole.

Thank you SAQA members for all of your help, for your sharing of ideas, and for the hard work that you all are doing in your local areas.

## Letter from the SAQA Journal Editor

by Carolyn Lee Vehslage  
clvquilts@yahoo.com, www.clvquilts.com



**W**here in the world is Carolyn Lee? As you read the Winter 2006 *SAQA Journal* online or in the printed version, I'm off sailing the sea. Crystal Cruises invited me back as their World Cruise artist. You can follow the progress of this year's two fiber art mail projects on my web site. Many of you participated in

the Far and Wide floating exhibition. Once again, I'll be spreading the word about art quilts and handing out business cards with the SAQA web site on them.

Deidre Adams is now the layout editor for the *SAQA Journal*, so thank her wholeheartedly for her excellent graphic design work next time you email her. Articles and reviews for the Spring 2006 *SAQA Journal* are due to me mid-May, when the ship reaches its final port of call.

## Exhibition Committee Report

by Judith Content

**T**he SAQA Board Members have voted to form an Exhibition Committee. Members are Judith Content, Chair; Katie Pasquini Masopust, Kim Ritter, Lisa Chipetine, Peg Keeney, Karey Bresenhan, and Arlene Blackburn. The committee will work closely with Director Martha Sielman and Board Treasurer Nancy Brakensiek.

The committee has defined four major responsibilities: to steer SAQA towards sponsoring and creating the highest quality exhibitions, to be a clearing-house for exhibition information, to make recommendations to the Board concerning possible exhibitions, and to create a proposal worksheet for individuals wanting to organize exhibitions that would be sanctioned or sponsored by SAQA.

The group is currently working on several exhibition opportunities for SAQA members. The committee is pleased to announce that Janome has become a Platinum Corporate Sponsor and has stepped forward to sponsor a SAQA "Gallery Style" exhibition at the Houston International Quilt Festival — details to be announced.

# Report from the SAQA Executive Director

By Martha Sielman

[www.marthasielman.com](http://www.marthasielman.com)



**A**s I write this, New Year's is just around the corner so I've been thinking about resolutions. By the time this *Journal* arrives

in your mailbox, it will be well past resolution time, but I'd like to suggest that you make one anyway. Resolve this year to improve the presentation of your artwork. Excellent photography is critical.

Your best artwork deserves a photograph that is lined up squarely and in very sharp focus across the entire image. The photograph needs to be properly lit so that the stitching is visible, and it needs to be properly color-balanced so that the colors match what you've created. You need to be able to provide the image of your piece in all the different formats that may be requested: slides, transparencies, and digital images.

We're thrilled with how wonderful the web site looks and with the new

Portfolio 12 books, but there are gorgeous pieces of artwork in both places that are not being presented as well as they should be because of the poor quality of the photography.

Professional photography is expensive, and it's sometimes difficult to find a photographer who knows how to photograph fiber properly, but it makes a huge difference in how people see your work. Very few people will ever see your artwork in person. Many, many more people will see a photograph of your work, either on the web site, in the Portfolios, on a postcard, in an exhibit catalog, or in a book. It is important that you present your work in the best possible way. Even if you take excellent photos, treat yourself to having one piece shot professionally and/or ask a photographer to review your photos and discuss with you how you might improve your lighting or color mix.

There is a list of photographers that other members have recommended on the web site under *Information*. If you have another photographer that you'd recommend, please let me know. We'd like to develop a listing for every area of the country. If possible, visit the photographer's studio

and ask to see samples of their FIBER photography. The first photographer that I used was recommended by a sculptor and had lovely work in magazines, but he didn't have the space to adequately hang my larger pieces. He also gave me back slides that had his fan in the picture frame. I found a different photographer.

My current photographer lays the piece on the floor in order to give it full support and shoots from up on a ladder. He spends an incredible amount of time setting up the shot and getting the lighting even across the piece. My piece, "Jellies of Monterey," combines white, three-dimensional jellies against a very dark blue-green background. While I might have been able to take an adequate photo myself, the professional photographer used five different lights to deal with the wide range of tones and shot a photo that makes the piece simply glow. This piece sold from the photograph; the collector bought it having never seen it in person.

Photography is an art. To the extent that your budget allows, invest in yourself. You need the very best images of your artwork that can be obtained.

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## Letters to the Editor

### Re: "How to Get a Solo Show"

Since [getting a solo] is one of my goals for the coming New Year, I read about others' experiences with interest. Almost without thinking, I contacted a regional college. The art faculty person who manages their gallery answered — she's new and enthusiastic, and we had a wonderful conversation that ended with a very positive response. This is really "synchronicity" at work, and I love it when that happens. So thank you to all who contributed your experiences for the article and offered a bit of a "nudge" to take a risk.

Jeanne Beck

[www.jeannebeck.com](http://www.jeannebeck.com)

### Re: "Derivative Art Quilts"

(Fall 2005)

In an effort to "master our materials," I have taken numerous workshops on technique. Resultant art quilts should be 100% acceptable in any juried exhibition, since the design/idea is an original concept of the artist. Art quilts should be judged by the clarity of their expression and not by the technique used.

When I have attended workshops on technique, I have gone prepared with my own original designs that were preconceived prior to the workshop. I may do a curved design for a workshop on curved piecing,

knowing that a "curve" is in the public domain. This also applies to workshops on transparency or raw-edge appliqué techniques.

I think it ill advised that one should go to her/his studio, lock out all outside influences, take no workshops, and look at no art quilts that are being produced, in order to produce original artwork and find one's "own voice." This notion is punitive and not realistic.

Doria A. Goocher



# Notes from the Board

By Linda MacDonald, Secretary  
www.lindamacdonald.com



**T**he Board minutes are now posted in the Members' section of our web site. Please check there to read the complete version. We meet every month via tele-

phone conference call, and I try to get the minutes to Eileen Doughty a few days later for posting on the web site.

Eileen has been adding to and editing the SAQA web site as needed on a volunteer basis. She adds content from Martha (our director), the Board, or Carolyn Lee Vehslage (our editor). This includes the PDF version of the *SAQA Journal*, additional

images, articles in the collector's corner, and the Board minutes. She also adds content from members who submit information about their quilts in public places or museums and their workshops and teaching opportunities, and she edits images on the Gallery that need improving. Lastly, she summarizes the site statistics each month for the Board, director, and editor to peruse and is also updating the listing of schools that offer M.F.A. (Master of Fine Arts) degrees with a textiles emphasis. Thank you Eileen!

Ann Anastasio adds information to the web site submitted by members. She edits and inputs members' news, the members' books section, events, calls for entry, and multiple-day seminars and workshops. Martha forwards information to her about tours, cruises, and other events. She also looks through magazines to find infor-

mation that is relevant to our members. Much of her time is spent in following up on incomplete information. She emphasizes that she wants as much information as possible about an event and then she can edit it down, if needed. Thank you, Ann!

We truly are exposing the art quilt to the greater world with the advertising for "Exposed!" at the Noho Gallery in New York City. Information has appeared in a variety of magazines. The February issue of *American Style* has two references to "Exposed!", one including an image of Sue Benner's artwork. *United Airlines' magazine, Hemispheres*, mentions the exhibit and includes another artwork. If you are flying United, please look for them. *House & Garden* will cover "Exposed!" on their web site, also using Sue Benner's image, and the *Forbes Collector* (online) has information

## Meet your new board members

### Karey Bresenhan



Karey Patterson Bresenhan, a 5th-generation Texas quilter, is president and CEO of Quilts, Inc., the company that owns and manages the Interna-

tional Quilt Market, the International Quilt Festival in both Houston and Chicago, and Patchwork & Quilt Expo in Europe. A quilt collector, she is also a co-founder of the International Quilt Association, the Texas Sesquicentennial Quilt Association, and The Alliance for American Quilts.

With her cousin, Nancy O'Bryant, Karey conducted the seven-year Texas Quilt Search, which culminated in a museum quilt tour and two award-winning quilt history books published by the University of Texas Press. She is the author or co-author of seven quilt reference books, the organizer of the five-year Journal Quilt Project, which will be the subject of a

2006 book, and the organizer of Quilters Comfort America, a project to assist in hurricane relief efforts after Katrina and Rita, which resulted in over \$1 million dollars in donations from quilters to the American Red Cross and in bringing in more than 15,000 quilts for the evacuees.

### Hilary Fletcher



Dr. Phil McGraw says that each of us has a small number of pivotal people who irrevocably change our lives. For Hilary Fletcher, one of those people is

internationally recognized fiber artist Nancy Crow. Nancy and Hilary were both living in Athens, Ohio, in the late '70s. Quilt National, the first juried exhibition devoted to what were then known as non-traditional quilts, was Nancy's brainchild, and Hilary's life changed forever after her visit to the first exhibition in 1979.

She became a member of the volunteer committee for the next exhibition, and in 1982, she became the Quilt National Project Director, a position that she intends to keep until the next QN opens in May, 2007. Then she'll retire and devote herself to fondling fabric, visiting her grandchildren, and enjoying life with her husband, Marvin, to whom she has been married for more than 40 years.

Hers is a demanding administrative position that is involved with all but two aspects of the exhibition — she doesn't make any of the quilts, and she doesn't select them.

She's also the director of The Dairy Barn Touring Exhibits Program and finds herself dealing with the artists/owners who are loaning the works as well as the museums and galleries who display the QN touring collections.

Hilary and her husband are also building an important collection of innovative quilts. She considers herself to be very lucky, not only because her collection includes works by some of the most well-respected artists working in the medium, but also because over the years, these people have become her personal friends.

about the exhibition. Marilyn Henrion has been spearheading the production and development of "Exposed!" The announcements have gone out, and the invitations to the various openings are printed and look great. Catalogs will be available for sale at the door.

We are also sponsoring the printing of the "On The Wall" catalogs for the exhibition in Colorado Springs. Deidre Adams has generously offered her professional design services for laying out the catalog and managing the publishing. 300 copies will be printed. The money will come out of the Northern Trust account (Maureen Hendrick's gift). SAQA will promote the catalog on the web site and at all SAQA venues. The newly formed Exhibition Committee will, in the future, be crucial in creating policies that determine which projects will get financial help.

Our booth at the Houston Quilt

Festival was a great success. We signed up new members, dispensed information, sold the great PAM Portfolios at cost, sold CDs of "Best of SAQA," and showcased our President's (Katie Pasquini Masopust) and past President's (Yvonne Porcella) art quilts. Our new signage looked great. We will also be at Quilt Festival in Chicago.

Lisa Chipetine has discussed the need for strategic planning, and that involves knowing who our members are, what their needs are, and how well we are serving them. We have about 200 PAM members and over 1,300 members altogether. Lisa is creating a printing needs RFP (Request for Proposal) for our next meeting.

Arlene Blackburn has been asked to put together a press kit/information package that describes our organization so that we can approach compa-

nies that might want to be sponsors. She is also volunteering on the Exhibition Committee. Thank you, Arlene!

The Board discussed the potential conflict of interest when a board member enters a SAQA-sponsored exhibition, even when an outside juror juries it. After much discussion, we decided that it was up to each Board member who is an exhibiting artist to decide whether or not she wants to enter a SAQA-sponsored exhibition.

A large part of our December meeting had to do with the budget. We reviewed 2005 and accepted the projected 2006 budget. We will present the 2005 and 2006 budgets to the members after the accountant reviews them. Our meeting in January will be in person in New York City.

She says that her life's goal is to foster an appreciation for all expressions of a wonderful medium. She believes that her association with SAQA will be another element in her ability to accomplish this task.

## Penny McMorris



I was the corporate art curator at Owens Corning Corporation for 20 years. While there, I developed an interest in contemporary quilts in the late 1960s and

curated one of the first contemporary quilt shows in the country in 1976. In 1986, I co-authored *The Art Quilt*, the first book focusing on quilt design development in the 1970s and '80s. I was then asked to be the American consultant for the British Craft Council's "Contemporary American Quilts" exhibition in London in 1993, and I was also guest curator for the "Homage to the Quilt" exhibition in 1988, and "Nancy Crow: Works in Transition" in 1992, both at

what was then The American Craft Museum.

As an independent consultant, I have helped form the contemporary quilt collections of Ardis and Robert James, now part of the International Quilt Study Center Collection, and that of John Walsh III, currently ongoing. I produced and hosted three PBS television series on quilting and am currently Vice-President of The Electric Quilt Company, makers of software for quilters. I was thrilled to be asked to join SAQA's Board and look forward to working for this extraordinary organization.

## Lisa Chipetine



A self-taught needle artist, I worked entirely by hand until the year 2000, when I developed severe carpal tunnel syndrome and tendonitis. My

right arm was rendered totally immobile, and in order to continue my art, I was

forced to purchase my very first sewing machine. As in life, out of something negative comes a positive. I discovered quilt making and working with thread and fabric in layers and dimensional forms — creating complex canvases by using my sewing machine as drawing tool. My work is shown nationwide as well as internationally — most recently at the Great Tokyo Quilt Festival in Japan. I am a member of the Signature Art Quilters and Fiber Revolution, in addition to being the New York State Co-Representative for SAQA.

As the head of administration and operations for a consulting firm in New York City, my life is extremely structured. My goal is to bring my entrepreneurial spirit and 25 years of business acumen to SAQA in an effort to act effectively as a communications conduit between the membership at large and the Board of Directors. I am honored to have been chosen to be the first individual to hold this special position on the Board. May 2006 be a year of growth and exciting achievement!

# Inspire Me!

By Brett Barker, SAQA Active Member  
www.brettbarker.com

As the winter doldrums set in, I find myself needing a little creative “kick,” a boost that will power me forward, inspiring me either to start or finish a quilting project. I often find that even a paragraph in a well-chosen book will provide just such motivation. Working with many different media in my pieces, I often turn to books that quilters might not immediately think of when searching for inspiration.

One such book from the world of graphic arts is *Graphic Design Cookbook* by Koren and Meckler (Chronicle Books, 1989.) This book contains virtually no words. Instead, on each small page you will find 8-12 graphic “recipes,” visual rectangular

or square layouts that are simple to understand and compare. No thinking is required. The artist simply chooses the most satisfying layout. With subheadings that include border considerations, pictorial devices, and page (think “quilt”) division into rectangular, spherical, and eccentric forms, you’re sure to find a compositional layout that fits your project.

Even though my formal art education and my own current book, *Color and Composition for the Creative Quilter* with Katie Pasquini Masopust (CT Publishing, 2005), have permanently imbedded color theory into my brain, sometimes I still need color inspiration. Then I turn to an artist’s folio and simply browse through their color schemes. Two favorite artists from the impressionist school seem to draw me over and over again. Books

featuring the artwork of French impressionist painter Pierre Bonnard and American oil and pastel painter Wolf Kahn line my shelves. Even when I’m not working with their particular color palettes, their unmatched blending of divergent color schemes gives me ideas every time.

Finally, every artist needs a support group—even if it’s from authors you’ve never met. *Art and Fear* by Bayles and Orland (Capra Press, 1993) is one of my absolute favorite books. I have underlined, highlighted, and starred sentences on almost every page. Whether just beginning the journey or in possession of a well-developed career, every quilter should have this book as a reference and commentary on the perils and promise of being an artist. ▼

## Resources for marketing and selling your work

### **How to Get Started Selling Your Art**

Carole Katchen  
North Light Books 1998

Presents various venues for selling artwork.

### **How to Sell Art: A Guide for Galleries, Consultants, Dealers and Artists**

Nina Pratt  
Succotash Press 1992

Although geared for art business professionals, this book is also of interest to artists who want to learn how to sell art effectively. Includes proven techniques used by top art dealers.

### **How to Survive & Prosper as an Artist: Selling Yourself without Selling Your Soul**

Caroll Michels  
carollmich@aol.com  
www.carollmichels.com  
Henry Holt & Company 2001

Written by the career coach who created the Artist Help Network.

### **Selling Art 101: The Art of Creative Selling**

Author/Editor: Robert Regis Dvorak  
Artnetwork Press, 2004

Provides information and advice on selling artwork, including closing secrets, how to use emotions when selling, listening techniques, how to get referrals, prospecting for clients, 14 power words, telephone techniques, finding and keeping clients, overcoming objections, developing rapport with a client, goal setting, and more.

### **The Art of Creating Collectors**

Zella Jackson  
The Consultant Press 1994

Although written for art dealers, this book contains information of use to artists for obtaining private and corporate collectors.

### **The Art of Selling Art**

Zella Jackson  
The Consultant Press 1998

Contains tips on how to sell art and build collectors.

### **The Artist's Guide to New Markets: Opportunities to Show and Sell Art Beyond Galleries**

Peggy Hadden  
Allworth Press 1998

Provides advice and ideas for selling art to individuals and new audiences and bypassing the gallery system.

### **www.artisthelpnetwork.com**

A web site with resources on a wide range of career-related topics for artists.

# Your own web site: What are you waiting for?

By Dena Crain, SAQA Africa Representative

Having a web site seems all the fashion these days. The market for art quilts in Kenya, even in Nairobi, is extremely small. Could having a web site make it possible for me to sell quilts without leaving my country? I wanted to know the truth about how successful the Internet is in generating sales and other promotional activities. I asked quilt artists about their experiences with web sites — specifically what the sites accomplished and whether they were worth the effort.

All spoke well about their online experiences. Most built their own sites or had computer-savvy spouses who did the work. Assembling all the necessary documentation was an onerous task, but a must-do even if a professional web designer set up the site. Kay D. Haerland ([www.kayhaerland.com](http://www.kayhaerland.com)) believes getting the right “look” hinges on knowing what the site is intended to accomplish. Define who you are and what you want your site to do for you.

Most found user-friendly software from a domain host and committed themselves to do the work. Tristan Robin Blakeman ([www.manmadequilts.com](http://www.manmadequilts.com)) says, “I got a freebie web site from Yahoo and used their free software. I spent a weekend playing around, and by Monday, I had a site.” By doing it themselves, the artists learned how to administer and update their own sites at a lower cost than having a pro do it.

Register your domain under your own name. Wendy Lugg notes, “[www.wendylugg.com](http://www.wendylugg.com) may not sound as catchy as [www.aussie-quilter.com](http://www.aussie-quilter.com), but it is much simpler to find and easier to remember.” Research other sites to find what works well and to discover your preferred style of presentation. Put serious effort into developing the

materials necessary for your site, including text and photography. Have someone else proofread the site and test it for broken links before you take it live.

There are ways to keep expenses down. Shopping for an inexpensive domain host, building and administering the site yourself, and making sales from the site reduced or eliminated expenses. Deana Hartman ([www.chameleonquilts.com](http://www.chameleonquilts.com)) sells supplies and patterns in addition to her artwork. She says, “Ninety percent of sales and ninety-nine percent of teaching contracts come from people who visit my site.” She points out, “Selling one small piece each year pays for hosting and domain name costs.” Tristan echoes this truth, “I could not have sold the amount of artwork that I have without it. Most of my art is sold via my site.”

There are indirect as well as direct benefits. The site tells everyone who you are and what you do. It builds

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*“Most of my art is sold via my site.”*

— *Tristan Robin Blakeman*

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name recognition and reputation, adding credibility and legitimacy to your artwork. Carol Taylor ([www.caroltaylorquilts.com](http://www.caroltaylorquilts.com)) says, “When folks see my quilts at shows or galleries, they have a place they can go to see more. They keep my site bookmarked, which is much better than giving them a business card.”

Having a site saves time and is convenient. Wendy sums it up, “When people request information, I direct them to my site.” Bob Adams ([www.bobadamsart.com](http://www.bobadamsart.com)) adds that a site permits free access to information.

Visitors can look at their leisure without feeling intimidated.

Dijanne Cevall ([www.picturetrail.com/dcevaal](http://www.picturetrail.com/dcevaal)) says, “I have had sales from an audience I would not normally have encountered.” The Internet grants access to a global market where the usual boundaries break down. Age, sex, ethnicity, social or economic class, geographic distance, and time differences do not prevent others from seeing your art on display.

All reported positive experiences with selling. They make certain they are paid *before* they ship. Checks or credit card authorization must clear before shipping. Buyers pay shipping, duty, and insurance. Most of the respondents do not use an independent money handler such as PayPal. Some do not accept credit cards, because sales do not justify the expense.

Good communication with prospective buyers helps ensure a positive experience on both sides. As in all Internet dealings, scams abound. Carolyn Lee Vehslage ([www.clvquilts.com](http://www.clvquilts.com)) says, “If you get to know your customers, you can figure out who’s for real.” Bob reports, “I have had offers from people overseas who are redecorating... ‘Would I be so kind to ship by USPS and will I accept cashier’s check or money order?’

“I received a cashier’s check for \$3,500. I called the bank and found that it was a fraud.” Bob was clever to investigate the payment. The lesson is clear: Be cautious and street-smart when it comes to money!

In addition to direct sales and commissions, a site elicits invitations to exhibit artwork. Carol reports that she has been “invited to a surprising number of galleries because they first saw my quilts on my site.” Carolyn Lee says, “I’ve been involved with five exhibitions that led to nine of my computer collages being acquired

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See “Web Site” on page 30



# Journey of Imagination

By Jill Heppenheimer

co-owner, Santa Fe Weaving Gallery, [www.fiberbydesign.com](http://www.fiberbydesign.com)

The journey of your imagination takes you along many paths, because there is no one road to success. The fact that you are making a commitment to your art form takes you further along your path than you likely give yourself credit for. Some people have put their fiber art first among life's priorities for as long as they can remember. However, many artists have only come to the "practice" of art in the past few years. Now you may be wondering, "How can I make this into a career?"

While my gallery only showcases wearable fiber, we have had occasion to critique bodies of artwork for many fiber artists specializing in quilts or other fiber-based wall pieces. The kinds of feedback and guidance we have provided revolve around prompting artists to 1) explore their motivations, 2) consider the challenges of establishing a professional career in art, and 3) move toward understanding where the center of gravity is in their artwork.

Taking each idea in turn, here's how we approach the questions raised.

## Motivation

You've undoubtedly loved fabric all of your life. Is it the pigment that runs through your veins? If all the fabrics that you lust after were to evaporate, would you create a loom or print studio to cobble together the fabric from which your art may flow?

Does your drive to create stem from a desire to articulate a picture (realistic or abstract), or to mess with the color, patterns, shapes, and affixing methods? Maybe this question only nibbles around the edges of your motivation, but the answer you develop may guide your path toward:

- making and selling completed pieces;

- making the fabric to sell to others whose frantic search for just the right color/texture/weight of cloth can end with stumbling upon your creative offerings;
- teaching;
- exhibiting;
- resourcing cloth from around the world for others; or
- curating exhibitions of others' work.

## Professional Career

Fame or fortune — does credibility need to come in one of those packages? Do you need the recognition of your peers or of recognized judges to say to yourself, "I've made it"? Maybe your unfolding into self doesn't need money or awards. While each person must figure this out for themselves, we pose these questions to artists who

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*Fame or fortune — does credibility need to come in one of those packages?*

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ask us for a review: "How important is selling to you? Why do you need to sell? Do you really need the money to live on? Why did you give up that day job?"

Art is a challenging taskmaster. Not everyone will make the necessary commitment to making it into the job that the marketing/self-promotion

component requires—so we ask, "Do you need to?" If not, there are so many other ways to embrace fiber arts as your 'life's work' without adding the onus of having to earn a living at it. You must be careful not to squeeze the juice out of your art in the pursuit of some ambiguous sense of success. There are very few successful venues for direct selling of your fiber art and even fewer galleries devoting their space and promotional effort to fiber, so if you are not 110% committed to self-promotion, then we would urge you to consider other ways of still committing to the passion of your life.

Here's some of what's involved in making your art a career. We know that you're totally comfortable with the idea of spending 6-12 hours a day, five days a week, in the studio — but how about 2-3 hours, three days a week, every week, working on the marketing side?

That time includes working on marketing materials (slides and CDs of images of your sellable artwork), letters and calls to galleries around the country, actually visiting those galleries to make sure that there is a fit between the gallery owners' aesthetics and your artwork, constantly reviewing your pricing to see if there is synergy between what you perceive to be your value and what the marketplace will buy, follow-up calls to galleries, making sure that your artwork is "on trend" with trends in buying tastes of the day, attending collectors' weekends to promote your work, chasing after publications with professionally-written press releases twice a year to try to get stories written, sending out stories that get written about you to your galleries with hand-written notes, providing photos of new artwork on a regular basis to your galleries and to publications,



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*You must be careful not to squeeze the juice out of your art in the pursuit of some ambiguous sense of success.*

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entering exhibitions to increase visibility, and so on.

It seems never-ending. Which part of the self-promotion work do you like? How about all of it? I've spent the better part of 14 years being really positive and encouraging for artists, and I still feel that way. A dose of reality is necessary: there is a lot of really solid competition among your peers and a limited set of outlets for fiber. Are your interests compatible with the world of art business?

### Center of Gravity

In physics, the center of gravity of an object is the point at which the object's mass can be evaluated to be concentrated. For example, if you hang an object from a string, the object's center of gravity will be directly below the string. The object's path in orbit depends only on its center of gravity.

Sometimes, we need to step back from our artwork, not just in the studio, but altogether, to get a handle on what its center is about. There are two benefits from this practice: 1) you get an arms-length means of talking professionally about your work as an artist, in ways similar to the fine art world, and 2) you see what a body of artwork communicates, what your path forward may be, and how all of this is relevant to the outside world.

What is your art attempting to say? What is *pivotal* in your compositions? By putting yourself out there, you are inviting viewers and potential collectors to enter your world, to embrace your experience and your thoughts, to enter into an intimate conversation with you, even if mute.

What is at the core of your artistic message? Can you clarify that with each piece that you create? Can you detect a growing and present urgency in your visual communication? There isn't a right or wrong answer, so my question isn't a trick: it is an opener to catalyze an artist to go deeper into

her or his frame of mind and find the "center of gravity."

These are but a small portion of the collection of questions that we use to help artists focus on why they are doing what they are doing. They help to clarify what paths artists may want to take with their artwork and what's involved. Use every opportunity to deepen your own connection to your art form and channel that relationship into greater relevance for the viewing public. ▼

Editor's Note: Santa Fe Weaving Gallery hosts the Design with Heart 2006 Fiber Conference March 25-29, 2006, [www.fiberbydesign.com/designwithheart](http://www.fiberbydesign.com/designwithheart)

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*sponsored by the Santa Fe Weaving Gallery*

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## Dual Exhibitions: Expand your possibilities

By Marina Salume  
SAQA Professional Artist Member

**H**ave you been trying to figure out how to get your artwork into a gallery exhibition? Perhaps you feel a bit shy about approaching galleries alone, or the sheer amount of effort involved in putting together enough quilts to fill an entire exhibition space is just too daunting. There is an answer that solves both problems: dual exhibitions.

Even if you don't know another artist you want to team up with, that doesn't mean you must pass up this collaborative experience. Our survey of SAQA members who have recent or upcoming two-person exhibitions found that most were paired with the other artist by the gallery or venue.

Several galleries looked for artists that used contrasting techniques or materials but had similar subject matters, color schemes, or styles. In this

way, several artists found their colorful quilts paired with photography. As Louise Thompson Schiele explained, "I was paired with Richard Murai. He creates black-and-white photographs of his travels to the Far East and beyond. They are very dark, mysterious, and thought-provoking. My artwork, on the other hand, is vivid in color. I also use my travel photos for much of my subject matter. That's why we decided on the theme, "Worlds Apart." Our artwork really goes well together; the solid hardness of his photographs and frames contrasts with the softness of my quilts."

Sometimes the artwork just seemed destined to be shown together. For example, Janet Ghio made a series of quilts inspired by African imagery using colorful African fabrics. She was invited to have an exhibition of her

African quilts with Ambassador Tibor Nagy. A former ambassador to Ethiopia, Mr. Nagy exhibited his photographs of Africa. Another gallery director paired fiber sculptor Patrick Maloney with quilt artist Therese May. He creates funny faces out of felted balls, and she has a series of heavily embellished child-like portraits.

Valerie Goodwin submitted a proposal to the Cultural Resource Commission for the City of Tallahassee, Florida. Every year, art by local artists is displayed in the City Hall and Tallahassee Regional Airport as part of the "Art in Public Spaces" program. She was partnered with photographer Jessie Lovano-Kerr, who specializes in architectural subject matter. Valerie said, "[It was] complementary because we were both interested in architectural imagery. Our artwork was intermingled in a very well-thought-out manner in terms of color, shapes, and other compositional ideas."

Often, the quilters hung their artwork on the wall, while the artists making more sculptural art displayed it on pedestals. Susan Leslie Lumsden paired up with sculptor K. Chrysalis. Susan makes silk art quilts featuring saturated hand dyes, glistening metallics, and dynamic quilting. She explains, "My friend Kitty and I have an exhibition that includes both my quilts and her exquisite wire baskets. To our amazement, when we hung the pieces, we found we often worked in similar palettes. We are best friends who create art totally independently from each other."

In general, the galleries did the installations, provided food for receptions, and even printed postcards and did some mailings. For less conventional venues like restaurants, the



**Labyrinth of the Hidden Goddess**  
35" h x 23" w © 2005 Valerie Goodwin  
[www.QuiltsByValerie.com](http://www.QuiltsByValerie.com)



**Untitled** © Jessie Lovano-Kerr



Below: *Ra*, 22" across  
© 2003 K. Chrysalis

Right: *Shine*, 28"h x 28"w  
© 2004 Susan Leslie Lumsden  
www.RebelQuilter.com



artists often had to do all the installation, food preparation, and publicity themselves. But at least there were two of them (plus friends and family) to share the load.

As Susan recalls, "The restaurant didn't participate in the layout. Kitty provided the munchies, and the restaurant provided the wine. I hung the art alone, and I made and sent out my own invitations. I had been told there would be a picture rail from which to hang my quilts, but that wasn't finished yet. So I nailed directly to the mortar of the brick wall."

Exhibiting in a restaurant can bring up some interesting issues. Susan explained, "The room we were using is an overflow room for the restaurant. Normally they use it for banquets, meetings, and so on. The night of the opening, they got slammed and wound up serving dinners on the tables down the middle of the room. So we were having our reception all around the diners. Surprisingly, it wasn't actually a problem. The room was big enough that we weren't tripping over each other—we could still chat with visitors, and the diners still had some privacy."

Although some pairings were orchestrated by the venue, other artists prefer to exhibit together on a regular basis. Husband-and-wife team Willy and Patricia Malarcher have shown together several times. Patricia said, "There is a contrast

between his wood panel paintings and my fabric creations. There is a connection in that both of us use reflective elements."

Fractal quilt artist Rose Rushbrooke often exhibits with watercolor painter Judith K. Townsend. Rose explained, "We are interested in the same subject — mathematical patterns. We both use a delicate medium that needs a certain care to ensure longevity. Watercolors fade in direct light, just as fabric does. Paper deteriorates when in contact with toxic substances, just as fabric does. We both emphasize color in our art and our finished pieces are abstractions. We like showing together, as our artwork is complementary, and we live near enough to be able to drive to the

venues. We aim to keep exhibiting as a partnership — it helps with expenses and offers a wider range of audience to the prospective venues."

Another fiber artist, Cornelia Jutta Forster, shared a venue with her mother, Jutta Forster, who is a collage artist. "One way in which our artistic sensibilities overlap is in our love of texture," Corni says. "I start work on a very smooth piece of cotton and add visual texture through monoprinting. Stitching and embellishments can then add further layers of interest. My mother achieves texture by combining monoprints, paper, preprinted fabrics, and other materials."

Overall, everyone reported positive experiences in their dual exhibitions. Sharing the work involved and getting to know other artists seemed to be fun for everyone. So the next time you see the box on an entry form that asks if you prefer a solo or a dual, why not take a leap? You just might find artistic inspiration and even make a new friend. ▼



*Orifice*, 12" h x 12" w x 2.5" d  
© Patricia Malarcher



*004. 2 Burnt Offering Series*  
11 7/8" h x 11 7/8" w © WILLY

## On the Wall

By Alice M. Zrebiec  
Consulting Curator, Textile Art,  
Denver Art Museum

**T**he title says it all. For more than a quarter of a century, the art quilt has been evolving, moving further away from its initial point of reference and departure, the quilt as bedcover, to claim its place as contemporary art on the walls of museums and galleries as well as public buildings and private homes. As juror for *On the Wall*, I selected those pieces that made the strongest, most successfully resolved artistic statements. My secondary goal was to choose artwork that also illustrated the wide range in style, subject matter, and techniques found in today's art quilts. The sixty-seven works of art vividly represent this diversity.

Many give a subtle nod to tradition while simultaneously exploring radically different sources, aesthetic con-

cepts, materials, and methods. While art quilts pieced from squares or rectangles may seem most familiar, recalling the construction of older quilts, this similarity is deceptive. In the hands of the artist, the repetition of geometric shapes is but the constant in an exploration of color studies, textural contrasts, or a celebration of pattern-and-decoration aesthetics. In "Pink/Orange/Red Squares," Eleanor McCain overlays larger pieced squares formed from the mentioned colors with another grid of stitched squares. Meiny Vermaas van der Heide achieves a catch-your-breath balance between the patterned and solid colored blocks creating a reasoned randomness in "Earth Quilt #107."

Frequently, the pieced blocks of art quilts are composed of eccentric, expressive shapes and colors; they explode beyond geometric norm or form as in Carol Taylor's "Chromatic

Rhythms." In the painterly extension of this approach, seen in Cathy Shanahan's "Pear," irregularly shaped pieces of fabric appear to morph into flashing brushstrokes, conveying the quickness and thickness of impasto while dynamically building the image.

While some artists use commercial materials to capture their intent, others find it necessary to dye or print their own fabric. Similarly, to suggest spontaneity or enrich their compositions, artists may paint, dye, print, use photo transfer or other techniques, in the quest of a desired effect. Dominic Nash begins with a piece of found fabric, such as a drop cloth leftover from screen-printing sessions, to which she adds other fabrics and hand stitching. Angela Moll uses journal entries screen-printed on fabric to create the pages of "Secret Diary 12: Standing in this Very Hot Spot." The seemingly legible text is not, and it depends upon compositional combination with fabric forms and colors to convey the intent of its message. Jeanne Williamson incorporates hand-printed textures of orange construction fences in the same-named series, of which #11 is in this exhibition.

Stitching, by hand or by machine, diverges from a strictly functional role and becomes a painterly tool in its own right, creating volume, shading, movement, and detail. Ann Johnston's stitched white background acts as a foil for "Blue Lines with Orange," an impressionistic sunset, while Deidre Adams uses a heavily machine-stitched quilt as an interactive surface for paint in "Chroma Study #1: Orange and Blue." Stitch lines and color fuse to create the movement of Peg Keeney's "Spinning."

The padding previously required for warmth now adds three-dimensionality and sculptural depth to ele-

***Chromatic Rhythms***  
Carol Taylor





**Secret Diary 12: Standing  
in this Very Hot Spot**  
Angela Moll

ments of a composition, as seen in the high-relief mallard ducks in Barbara McKie's "Autumn Reflections."

The use of very fine or sheer fabrics—antithetical to the needs of a traditional quilt—allows for layering that alters colors and spatial relationships. Marilyn McKenzie Chaffee explores this approach in "Venture Series #5: Opposite Attraction," while Patricia Kroth captures swirling colors in her two-sided "Spiral Dance" that allows the viewer to look not only at, but through, the piece.

Some artists create within obvious restrictions of forms or colors to build a complex image. Cher Cartwright limits herself to rectangles to express her story of "More than a Few Blocks." Others seemingly acknowledge no bounds and freely employ a wide variety of materials and embellishments. Carolyn Lee Vehslage mixes entertainment, computer, electronic, and print media in "Mixed Media Version 1.3: Black and Blue" as she merges appliqué and technology.

The breadth of subjects portrayed and sources of inspiration parallel the variety of materials and styles. Some compositions are inspired by the unseen or microscopic elements of nature; others convey a sense of place rather than a rendition of the place. Michele Hardy celebrates the colors and textures found in raw and polished rocks in "Colorfields: Emerald" while Jean Neblett captures the sensation of the last rays of daylight in "Cairo in Reflections 5: Sunset on the Nile." Noriko Endo's "Woodland" suggests a real forest that one can enter, even as Anne Eckley's "Ice Cave" is ethereal and emotive. Judith Trager's "Salt River Canyon" reminds us of the layers of human history that are embedded in the geological layers.

In addition to nature, the quilts on view present portraits and political commentary. Their direct inspiration,



however, is often much more personal. Clairan Ferrono's "Self Portrait: Through a Daughter's Eyes" is an interesting twist in depicting the vagaries of perception. Compelling and courageous are the numerous attempts to evoke the intangible—movement, feelings, emotions, and ambiance—difficult to describe in words and challenging to depict through color and form.

The makers of art quilts come from varying backgrounds and represent

different viewpoints. While some began as quilt makers, others first trained in painting, printmaking, aesthetics, and other disciplines. All, however, find that they can best express their ideas through the fiber and thread—and mixed media—of the art quilt. "On the Wall" invites you to discover the range and richness of their creative art. ▼

The "On the Wall" exhibition catalog is available for \$22.00 (\$19.50 plus \$2.50 shipping and handling) at <https://www.sqa.com:444/orders.aspx>



**Self Portrait:  
Through a  
Daughter's Eyes**  
Clairan Ferrono

# Exposing the Significance of Contemporary Art Quilts in Noho Gallery Exhibition

by Ed McCormack

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“**T**o him belongs the honor of being (after Navajo blanket-weavers and Amish quilt-makers) the first American abstract artist,” John Updike wrote in an essay on Arthur Dove. But what interests us here, more than Dove himself, is the parenthetical acknowledgment that textiles were the very first medium for abstract art in this country. For this is a fact almost always overlooked, even thirty-five years after the Whitney Museum mounted its landmark exhibition “Abstract Art in American Quilts.”

Thus “Exposed!” seems the perfect title for a show that endeavors to reveal what it calls “the art world’s biggest secret.” Curated by Dorothy Twining Globus of the Museum of Arts & Design, and sponsored by Studio Art Quilt Associates, Inc. (SAQA), an international non-profit organization “dedicated to informing

the public about the continuing achievements of the art quilt movement,” the exhibition was recently seen at Noho Gallery, 530 West 25th Street.

“Although many insist on distinguishing between art and craft, the selection here reflects a belief that they exist on a continuum, each informing and enhancing the other,” says Globus, who selected the works in “Exposed!” from almost 600 entries. “The art quilt still must have physicality to it, evoking a desire to touch it, test its weight, feel the textures. The presence of the hand, recorded in countless stitches, obsessive patching of small bits, and of the eye that shapes a coherent and compelling composition with a sense of color and form, were among the factors that guided this selection. Each of these quilts demonstrates in its own approach the potential of and new ways of painting with fabric as the medium.”

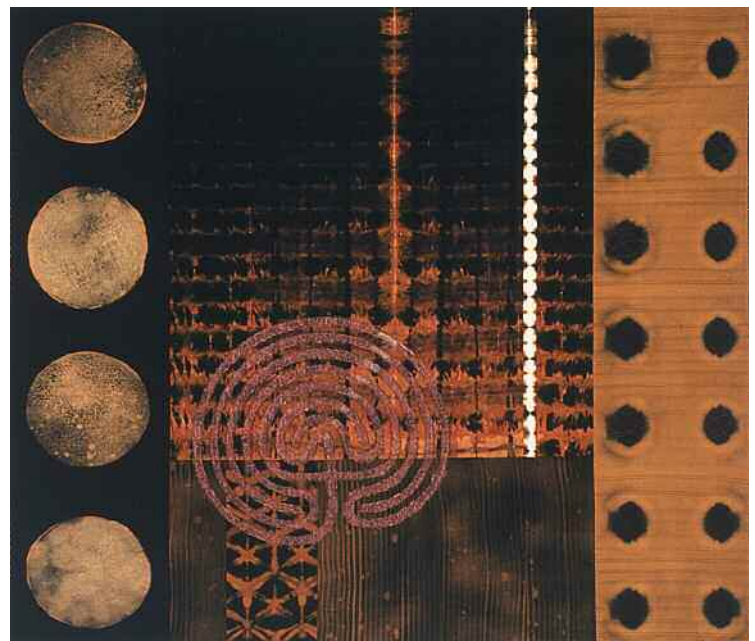
Globus really puts her finger on it (if one may indulge in a terrible pun)

when she speaks of how these works cry out to be touched. But since touching is a no-no in a gallery, the pieces in this show take on an exquisite tactile tension — the visual titillation which spices all desire that is forbidden! In art, after all, context is everything; thus art quilts really come into their own in a gallery setting, where they shed all domestic associations and assume their true power as art objects.

One of the most radical departures in this regard is “Melted,” by Jill Rumoshosky Werner, in which stitched fabric strips are twisted into a freely flowing 3-D configuration that brings quilting into the space of sculpture, suggesting a softer counterpart of John Chamberlain’s macho masses of smashed auto parts. However, each of these artists finds ways to “make it new” as Ezra Pound once exhorted modern poets — and by extension all modern artists — to do. Angela Moll, for example, extends the tradition of so-called autograph quilts, with “Secret Diary 2,” in which

Right: ***Mole & Henge***, 56” x 64”  
© Linda Colsh

Below: ***Melted***, 14” x 24” x 24”  
© Jill Rumoshosky Werner





agitated tangles of hand-scrawled and sewn text are interspersed with irregularly rectangular patches of color, creating a raw, emotionally charged surface that belies the stereotype of quilts as placid decorative entities.

Photo-derived screen-prints of a demure woman with neatly waved hair suggesting 1950s family album portraits are juxtaposed with fragments of letter forms, elements of Judaica, and oversized stitches in Judith Plotner's "Deconstructed Memories." Plotner combines a sense of narrative and nostalgia with the lively visual variousness of a Kurt Schwitters' "Merz" collage.

One of the more "painterly" pieces in the exhibition is Joy Saville's "St. Basil's," its intricate abstract, visually kinetic composition created with a multitude of tiny pierced and stitched triangles of cotton, linen, and silk. Saville makes these patches of color shimmer like brushstrokes in an Impressionist painting — an especially impressive feat, since her palette of subdued grays and earthy browns is more reminiscent of Cubism.

By contrast, Jeanne Lyons Butler opts for an austerity akin to Agnes Martin's minimalist canvases in "Edge (White #10:24)," combining paper, bamboo, cotton, silk, and cheesecloth with such subtle refinement that one can barely distinguish between drawn and stitched lines. In Butler's beautifully balanced composition, precise forms resembling blown-up fragments of lined yellow writing paper float against a white-on-white appliquéd field.

Elizabeth W. Fram, on the other hand, builds texture and spatial tension into "Blue Stripe," where the "push and pull" of abstract expressionism is achieved through the juxtaposition of rectangles and irregular abstract shapes. Fram's tactile way with machine embroidery and hand quilting lends a weighty presence to her work.

Two other artists give the lie to the notion of quilts as invariably cheery, cuddly, and comforting: Linda



**Element Series #3:  
Existence**  
42" x 41"  
© Sandra LH Woock

Colsh's "Mole & Henge" is a richly somber composition, in which an optically dazzling interplay of circular and rectangular shapes enlivens a variegated field of mostly dark hues. The expansive scale of Colsh's work adds to its impressive depth.

Deborah Gregory's "Choices and Pathways II" evokes an almost sinister sense of mystery with shadowy forms seen within a fiery red realm — a sort of hellacious "scorched earth" mood that is quite startling in context. Gregory's use of a mesh-like fabric enables her to create effects as amorphous and atmospheric as those in even the most spontaneous abstract painting.

Apparently, the title of Sue Benner's work "Grandmother's Garden IV: Rose Nest" is a play on the name of a kind of traditional floral quilt. However, Benner's approach is anything but traditional, with circular stylized floral forms filling an overall composition that has more in common coloristically and conceptually with Warhol's repetitive, deadpan Pop motifs. Sandra L.H. Woock also draws from popular culture in "Element Series #3," evoking chalk-

board scrawls and street graffiti with a funky, energetic vortex of colorful marks swirling against a black background.

In "Lichens #4," Margaret Anderson mixes mediums by adding acrylic paint to a composition that also includes hand appliqué and quilting. Yet the painted elements are so dependent on the sewn ones for their total effect that her buoyant lyrical abstraction seems entirely at home in this exhibition.

Then there is Susan Ball Faeder, who employs vintage Japanese cottons, plastic netting, and hand appliqué in a long, vertical format suggesting an Asian scroll. However, Faeder's piece, with its converging planes and rioting patterns, has a fractured elegance and a vertiginous energy all its own.

One could go on and on, as reviewers often do, about the folkloric and feminist implications of contemporary fine art quilts. But what really needs to be said, and what this exhibition makes most clear, is that they are the medium of choice for some of our most innovative mainstream artists. ▼

## Exposed!

By Dorothy Twining Globus, Curator,  
Museum of Arts & Design

Selecting just enough quilts to fit comfortably within the confines of a relatively small gallery was the assignment. Running through almost 600 entries, carefully arranged in a daunting tower of slide carousels, was the challenge. My first thoughts centered on the wonderful productivity and creativity of so many artists. The array confirmed the fact that the innate need to make, *joie de faire*, as so aptly described by Ellen Dissanayake, persists as a basic human activity.

Although many insist on distinguishing between art and craft, the selection [of the Exposed! quilts] reflects a belief that they exist on a continuum, each informing and enhancing the other. The art quilt still must have physicality to it, evoking a desire to touch it, test its weight, and feel the textures. The presence of the hand, recorded in countless stitches, obsessive patching of small bits, and of the eye that shapes a coherent and compelling composition with a sense of color and form, were among the factors that guided my selection. Each of these quilts demonstrated in its own approach the potential of fabric as the medium.

In Joy Saville's "St. Basil's," seemingly thousands of small diamonds and triangles in a tightly controlled palette of subtle neutrals are assembled into a powerful abstraction of pieced surfaces. In "Grandmother's Garden IV," Sue Benner has enlarged and thus transformed the sometimes fussy style of the same name.

Combining graphic elements and discharge-dyed fabrics, Linda Colsh also uses scale to great effect in "Mole and Henge." In contrast is Elizabeth Fram's intimate but strong "Blue Stripe."

Margaret Anderson builds up layer upon layer to create a remarkable luminosity of color in "Lichens #4." Deborah Gregory combines color and texture at a bold scale in "Choices and Pathways," a work afire with energy. In contrast, Jeanne Lyons Butler quilts paper and bamboo sticks onto cotton and silk in a beautifully serene and pale composition "Edge (White #10:24)." "When is a quilt not a quilt?" was the issue with the very appealing bundle of stitched straps that make up "Melted" by Jill Rumoshosky Werner; it passed the test!

The evocation of memory pervades several of the quilts. Judith Plotner's assemblage of "Deconstructed Memories" invites speculation of whose memories; who was this woman and what was her story?

Angela Moll's "Secret Diary 2" is a modern composition drawing upon the tradition of calligraphic, auto-graph quilts. A distinctive graffiti quality, like chalk drawing on a blackboard, accounts for a strong and personal energy in Sandra LH Woock's "Element Series #3." Susan Ball Faeder's "Bora Bora I" is a dense accretion of scraps, mostly Japanese fabrics, which reflects an Asian reverence for even these small bits of pattern and color.

In choosing art from slides, an element of risk persists; they are never the same as the real thing. The texture, the quality of work, and the success of a piece at its real size can only be guessed at. On the other hand, if the strength of an artwork is evident, even with these limitations, it will only be better in actuality.

The final choices were made with the intention of presenting a coherent and effective exhibition that would reflect the mission of the SAQA organization: to bridge the gap between quilt and art, and to foster the recognition of quilts as a legitimate form of fine art. While covering a range of styles and techniques, the dozen pieces complement each other, forming a compelling and beautiful exhibition. You might almost forget they are quilts because, first of all, they are works of art. ▼

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# Art Quilts X: Narrative, Figurative, Abstract, and Post Modern

By Thelma Smith, SAQA Active Member  
www.thelmasmith.com

**A**rt Quilts X — Xhilarating: Joy in the Making,” on exhibition at the Chandler Center of the Arts in Chandler, Arizona, from November 4, 2005, to January 8, 2006, included the whole fine-art spectrum as well as folk art and naive art. It was thought-provoking to see such a breadth of good art in one venue.

Curator Diane Howell has presented the work of emerging artists to an eclectic mix of visitors for the last ten years. Her focus has always been to present a range of art that will entice Everyman into the appreciation of media unknown to the general public. Howell’s stated intent is to encourage knowledge and appreciation of the art she chooses to hang. Her skill in hanging an exhibition of such diversity is an art in itself, often unnoticed or ignored.

The Gallery at the Chandler Center is a huge room with a high ceiling and a circular skylight emphasizing the roundness of the space. The displays are professionally lighted; the translucent, UV-blocking dual glazing in the dome provides a completely different vision and experience during the daylight hours.

Bodil Gardner’s engaging “*Sheep in the Field*,” just inside the gallery’s door, introduced “Art Quilts X.” Gardner is from Lystrup, Denmark. Her quilt was a wonderful look at a small Danish town. Divided into a five-by-five block irregular grid, the main rectangle told of a rural way of life. The upper rectangles and squares spoke of the northern latitudes, the long nights, and the delights of the night sky. Machine appliquéd of commercial Danish fabrics, it was both sophisticated and folk art.

“*Turquoise at Cedar Mesa*,”\* by Marilyn Gillis, had the coloration and hints of geometric form seen in the

red rock country of northern Arizona. It could be perceived either as abstract or landscape — the artwork succeeded admirably in either case. The use of wool and silk nuno felting was tightly contained, austere, and well-disciplined. The spectacular, saturated color was integral rather than applied. The use of tumbled turquoise stone to indicate a cleft in the rock wall, combined with metallic threads, was both indigenous and universal and made this artwork best of show, in my opinion.

“*Early Fall II*”\* by Diane Bielak showed promise. What appeared to be sun-printed hickory leaves showed a loving gentleness contemplating the coming winter. As Bielak grows in her art, she will master the use of couched embellishment. It needed to be integral to the design so that the idea behind it could have been made clearly apparent to the viewer. As an afterthought, it distracted.

“*Vertical Form*,”\* by Pat Owoc, deftly combined the narrative of the plains landscape with abstraction in an austere use of a few elements suggestive of the plains icon, the windmill. Background fabric masterfully gradated from a muted burgundy at the bottom to a sky blue at the top, as well as the use of strongly colored reverse-appliquéd outlining and low-contrast inserts, evoked the low light of a waning day on the plains.

The joyous, rollicking artwork of Laura Fogg was figurative, narrative folk art at its best. Fogg subtly brought redwood, ranch, mountain, and river country into “*Eat Your*

See “Art Quilts X” on page 18



*Sheep in the Field*  
© Bodil Gardner



## Art Quilts X from page 17

Veggies.” A wonderful representation of the rural lifestyle more prevalent fifty to one hundred years ago, the quilt combined master craftsmanship with a naive perspective that made me cock my head this way and that.

Fogg’s other piece, “Seven Sisters Samba,” was the lush, rowdy, celebration of Carnivale. It grew from a set of star blocks, named after the seven sisters of the night sky. One of the quilt’s best attributes was Fogg’s seamless integration of traditional piecework block patterns with the expression of the personal, intuitive, and emotionally-charged scenes lodged passionately in her mind.

In stark contrast with Fogg’s artwork was Barb Wills’ “Contemplation,” which was abstract, small, and subtle. Her words explained it best, “the Buddhist concept of contemplation — taking the time to see through the textures and the layers.” While there was no less passion than in Fogg’s art, it was expressed through the delicacy of oil-based monoprints on silk. Design, arrangement, and sewing were the visual depiction of her words.



### Contemplation

© Barb Wills

ing that I keep shortening my viewing distance. It was insistent, and I realized how intentionally the artwork was arranged and how powerfully the thought was expressed.

Dissimilar at first glance, “Blue Rhythm”\* by Margit Morawietz, “Spy Guys” by Marla Hattabaugh, and “Aspens I”\* by Brenda H. Smith, all showed — subtly and distantly — the influence of Nancy Crow. Not one of the quilts would be considered directly derivative; however, the strip piecing and compound curved seaming had their roots. It may be time for the world of art quilts to coin a phrase to recognize the contributions of Nancy Crow and to define this style of artwork.

“Blue Rhythm”\* was simple and lyrical, six pieces of indigo punctuated with a bit of brilliant fabric origami. It told me Morawietz was studying thoughtful reserve as an expressive tool. “Spy Guys” was a new take on Hattabaugh’s love of giraffes. They were unseen except to the knowing eye within her abstract blocks. “Aspens I” was a subtle, string-pieced patchwork that evoked the delicacy of

“Work Out Video,” by Tristan Robin Blakeman, was an interesting counterpoint to Fogg’s blocks. Blakeman used seemingly prosaic patchwork to create a look that could be described as “Charles Atlas meets Andy Warhol.” Well done! The hand-printed blocks of the muscle man breaking a chain around his biceps, and the repetitive smaller printed blocks intermixed with commercial fabric, showed that old-fashioned patchwork is alive and thriving.

At first glance, “Correspondence: Joyful Lives,”\* by Virginia Spiegel, was a joyous collection of studio sweepings, but it was sneaky and deceptive. It pulled me in, demand-



**Eat Your Veggies**  
© Laura Fogg

### Work Out Video

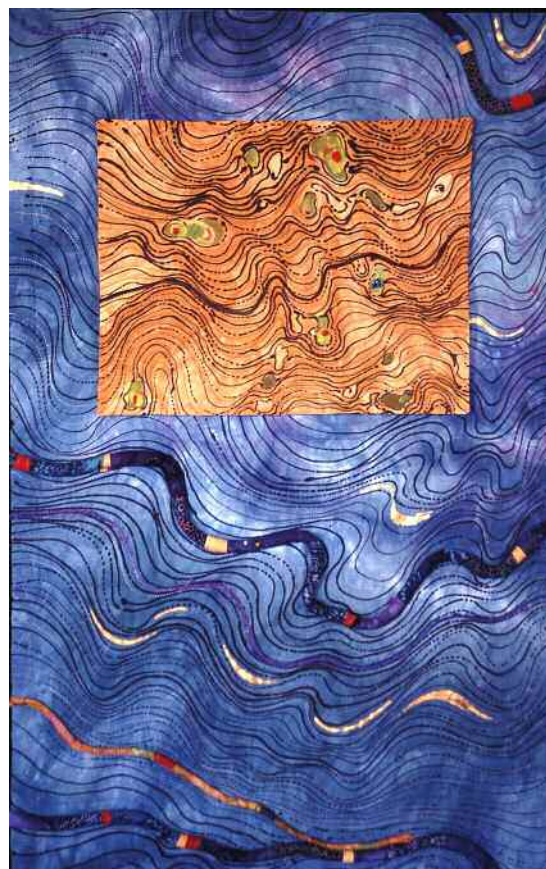
© Tristan Robin Blakeman  
[www.ManmadeQuilts.com](http://www.ManmadeQuilts.com)







**Spy Guys**, © Marla Hattabaugh



**Flow**

© Susan Crouse Kemp  
www.sckart.com

the play of light and shadow at end of day among the aspens.

"Lady Luck,"\* by Pamela Allen, took her use of topical quilting motifs to a level I had not seen before in her artwork. The roulette wheel and all the accouterments of a slick trapunto-stitched gambling casino filled the background. All this information sneaked in around my perception of Lady Luck herself. Allen is a mature artist with a mature body of artwork. "Lady Luck" showed the artist in a growth spurt. I want to see where this line of inquiry leads.

"Flow," by Susan Crouse Kemp, suggested a topographical map from the air, evoking the land and the spirit. The use of hand-painted fabrics, complementary colors, and cord- ing emphasized the lyricism.

Showing quiet contemplation and love of the wilderness, "Through the Grass," by Peg Keeney, had a delicate delineation of a sweet-grass patch, grasshopper and all. I really would like to see a body of artwork from Keeney as she progresses.

"An Ovarian Attitude,"\* by Lisa Chipetine, was a powerful look at the universality all women share. Excellent use of hand-marbled fabrics, depth, and texture abstractly expressed passion and grief.

A particularly interesting use of sheers coupled with a more painterly mounting in "Cityscape," by Marni Goldshlag, caused me to reconsider the usual definitions of "art quilt." This piece was a pale, silent, reflection of solitude within the intensity of energy and density of people in New York City.

The much larger percentage of figurative and narrative works is an interesting development. Is it a trend? Or is Chandler a narrative-friendly venue? The field of textile arts has grown exponentially in the last ten years. Perhaps it is time to take a step back. With sixty-one works of art, the Chandler Art Center Gallery was bursting at the seams. Opening reception attendance was large enough that viewing the art at differing focal lengths required patience. We must remember that as artists and curators, we want each work to stand free. Each image needs to be unfettered by its neighbors. However, the growth of recognition of our field and Howell's success is surely indicated by the new Chandler Art Center exhibition, "Tied Together: Textile Art in the 21st Century," May 15 through July 2,

2006. Call 480.917.6859 for more information. ▼

\*To see full-color images of these quilts, go to [www.saqa.com](http://www.saqa.com) and look for the "Art Quilts X – Xhilaration: Joy in the Making" review under **Information > Exhibition Reviews**.



**Cityscape**, © Marni Goldshlag  
www.marnigoldshlag.com



## Quilts for Art's Sake 4

By Elizabeth Van Schaick,  
SAQA Active Member

"Quilts for Art's Sake 4," at the Makeready Press Gallery in Montclair, New Jersey, from November 1 to December 31, 2005, displayed the wide range of design sensibilities among current fine artists working in the art quilt medium. Styles, sizes, color palettes, and techniques were diverse. However, several of the most haunting pieces seemed to be drawn together by a concentration on the figure or creation of some sort of portrait.

Lori Lupe Pelish's intricately appliquéd "Bad News" pictured a woman, a man, and a child captured in a moment of grief. The artist exploited the dark, medium, and light values of fabrics to create graphic contours, making the figures

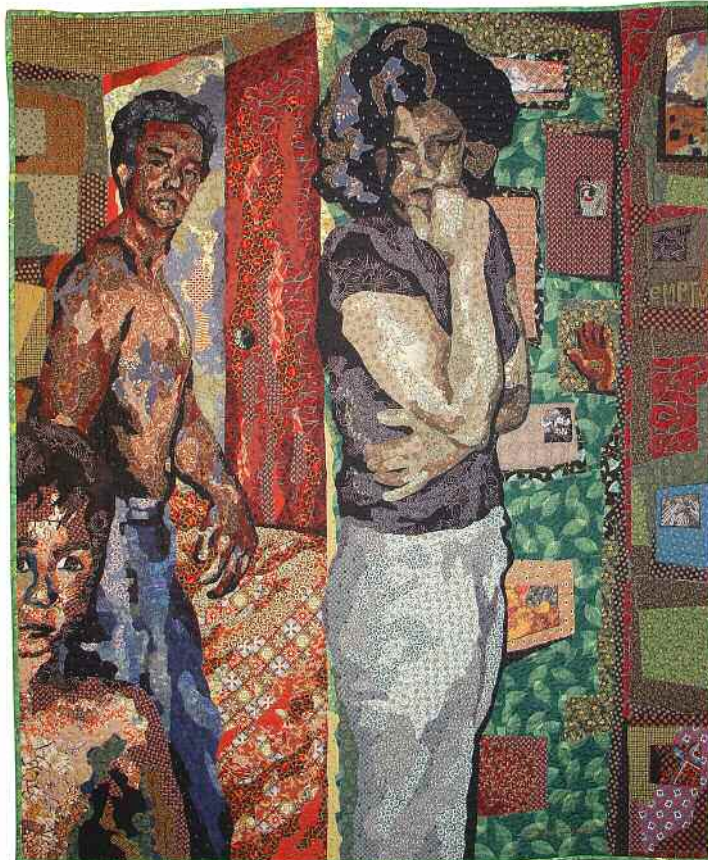
appear three dimensional as well as pensive. The traditional patterns and colors of the fabrics, which carry connotations of comfort, pushed against the suggestion of inner distress and paralysis of the family members.

Another portrait of grief was Lisa Kristen-Scott's "My Life Without My Mother." She constructed squares, rectangles, and circle-shaped quilts and held them in place with very thin wires. The piece hung free in the middle of the room to show the stained glass effect of the sheer fabrics and the filigree of the open areas between the fabric elements. The varied fabrics included translucent sheers, red velvet, pinks, shiny opaque gold, sheer gold organza, and even corduroy. Four sheer pockets held small shells. Texture and talismans evoked personal memory. Symbolic of the contours of grief itself, the blank spaces — absences —

in the quilt were as primary as the structure.

Pat Kumicich made a vivid impression with "Mood Swings." Three female faces were arranged horizontally against a background of black diamonds alternating with blue, gray, and yellow diamonds. The three long-necked women with pointed "hair" almost seemed to sway. The first was done in blue, the second in mostly black and beige, and the third in orange, yellow, red, and black. Although the trio seemed whimsical, their unsmiling features suggested something more unsettling, and their forthright eyes seemed to beg for connection or compassion. Kumicich struck this balance well, staying away from trite stereotypes of color and mood symbolism.

In her other piece, "Daily News: War Stories," Kumicich used figures for a political conversation. She



Left: *Bad News*, 54" h x 44" w © Lori Lupe Pelish  
[www.lorilupepelish.com](http://www.lorilupepelish.com)

Below: *Daily News: War Stories*, 39" h x 33" w  
© 2005 Pat Kumicich, [www.pkartquiltstudio.com](http://www.pkartquiltstudio.com)





## **Separation?**

31" h x 31" w

© 2004 Joanie San Chirico  
www.joaniesanchirico.com



reacted to the ever-rolling headlines and personal effects of the war in the Middle East. She placed a small woman in each of nine blocks. Each portrait was carefully rendered with a thickly embroidered face and “mod” hairstyle of slate blue, pink, tangerine, purple, lavender, gray, beige/brown, blue/light blue, green, moss green, or yellow. The figures had appliquéd breasts accented with beads in the centers for nipples. Over the collection of women, the artist superimposed vertical rows of barbed wired made from waxed thread. This created an immediate impression of violence and entrapment.

Again, the stylized charm of the female portraits clashed against a more serious undercurrent. They symbolized women trying to negotiate personal concerns, patriotism, conscience, and the media. The backgrounds of the blocks were filled with repeated machine-stitched text: SUPPORT OUR TROOPS; WOMEN OF THE WORLD UNITE; NO MORE WAR; I SUPPORT OUR TROOPS BUT WANT THEM HOME; BLESSED ARE THE PIECEMAKERS; and the playful MAKE QUILTS NOT WAR. In the sashing were the phrases: WAR CRIMES; WAR BRIDES; MEN FIGHT, WOMEN WAIT; EMANCIPATE; FREEDOM; and EDUCATE.

While these works of art were portraits of psyches and socio-political engagement, Joanie San Chirico’s “Separation?” could be considered a portrait of a nation. San Chirico moved from her signature semi-abstract arches motif to a risk-taking appliquéd collage. She carefully selected images to explore the debate over separation of church and state. She used photographic elements of statues and architecture from New York, Washington, and ancient Rome, and arranged them on a dramatic

dark burgundy background. Then she accented her composition with hand stitches and encased it in a thick layer of sealer. Interestingly, the X stitches bear a visual affinity with the Xs in the barbed wire in Kucicich’s war piece.

San Chirico’s juxtaposition of elements was provocative. The Statue of Liberty, the Capitol dome, a medieval religious figure, and various cathedral arches mixed with Latin inscriptions such as “Pontific” and “Senatus.” The head of a male statue occupied the bottom right foreground. It seemed to be Thomas Jefferson. Conflating him with a Roman bust evoked broad affinities — icons of differing triumphant monuments and crusades.

San Chirico’s design suggested how historical and persistent the Church has been in shaping terrain and policy. Conversely, it showed at the same time how much religious reverence we Americans give to our secular national figures and perceived political guarantees. The close structural attachment of the images and the question mark in the title point to how tenuous, if not mythical, the line between religion and national politics can be.

Mary Ellen Latino’s piece “Painted Mask” also added to the ensemble of portrait artwork. She primarily used batik resist and dye painting. An African pattern of black with cream designs formed the overall backdrop. In the center, Latino placed a vividly colored lime, tangerine, fuchsia, black and greenish yellow mask with head-



## **Painted Mask (detail)**

© Mary Ellen Latino

piece on a lime-to-coral gradated background. Zigzags and dots in the black background were echoed in the decorative elements of the mask face. The graphic facial components had some similarity to the portraits in “Mood Swings,” but what was striking were the patterns suggesting ritual face painting. Unlike the other portraits, embellishment played a significant part here, in the form of long yarn fringe, beads, cowrie shells, and the painted earrings on the mask. Traditionally, an African mask is generally both artifact and art. Latino translated one medium into another. She consequently lost the three-dimensionality of the actual mask but was able to capitalize on fiber techniques and pattern and ratchet up the color palette. Placed next to the other figure images, this piece prompted me to think about how the individual mask becomes a portrait of a tribal culture.

The pieces discussed in this review were memorable for their dramatic contrasts and sophisticated use of color. The artists expressed their vision of struggles in the contemporary world. Some of the timely topics they dealt with have been debated freely, while others have previously been surrounded with silence. Through their art, these four women left lasting, vibrant statements. ▼

# Fiber Revolution: A Survey of Styles

By Maxine Farkas  
SAQA PAM member  
[www.artquiltsonline.com](http://www.artquiltsonline.com)

Having watched the evolution of the Fiber Revolution group on the Internet but never having had the opportunity to view the artwork other than online, the New England Quilt Museum exhibition “A Survey of Styles” of art by eighteen members of the group was my first exposure to their work in the cloth. On their web site, Fiber Revolution defines themselves as “a network of professional textile artists combining their knowledge and experience in marketing to exhibit and sell their artwork.”

The November 3, 2005 to January 7, 2006 exhibition was juried by the museum from slides submitted by individual members of the group. It is indeed a survey; however, there is little that held this group of artwork together other than the structural

characteristics inherent in the quilt medium. It included artwork that used a vocabulary drawn from the quilt world and artwork that used a fine arts vocabulary. While technical mastery abounded, there was little that was new or revolutionary.

Studies abounded in this exhibition. “Two Twin Toads,”\* by C. Susan Ferraro, a small diptych of two heavily textured and beautifully executed toads, was a case in point. While great attention was paid to the figures, little or none was given to the context in which they were presented. Kevan Rupp Lunney’s “Dancer” was a beautifully realized figure on a ground that served more as a distraction than as a support.

“Where Were We?,” by Elizabeth Poole, on the other hand, was an extraordinarily powerful study of an embrace. Poole’s artwork is characterized by exquisite balance and an uncanny ability to capture a moment in time. Poole eliminated the figure/ground quandary by employing an extremely tight focus that served her well.

“Autumn in New England,”\* by Barbara Barrick McKie, was a seemingly random grouping of autumn landscape image transfers joined in a manner reminiscent of M. Joan Lintault’s cutwork. It lacked unity and flow; the series of static images had little movement between them.

## *Where Were We?*

23”h x 13”w

© 2003 Elizabeth Poole  
[www.elizabethpoole.com](http://www.elizabethpoole.com)

## *Dancer*

64”h x 41”w

© Kevan Rupp Lunney  
[www.fiberrevolution.com](http://www.fiberrevolution.com)







**Sliver of Hope**  
55" h x 53" w  
© 2004 Lisa Chipetine  
www.threadplay.com



**Pod**  
60" h x 30" w x 30" d  
© Kevan Rupp Lunney  
www.fiberrevolution.com

The statement accompanying "Release IV"\* by Judy Cuddihee claimed it was an invitation to sensual abundance. Yet the artwork presentation was static and rigidly controlled, almost labored in conveying its message. On the other hand, "Sliver of Hope," by Lisa Chipetine, while speaking not at all to sensuality, was indeed an invitation. Chipetine's manipulation of fabric in this piece emphasized the strengths and three-dimensional possibilities inherent in the medium.

Kevan Rupp Lunney's "Pod" carried fiber as a sculptural medium to a logical conclusion. The free-standing three-dimensional Pod enticed; the desire to climb into it and experience

being enclosed within was strong.

Perhaps the least successful marriage of fine art and quilt vocabularies was Barbara Corrigan's "Wedding Quilt."\* Nine reduction prints on paper were presented as a nine-patch quilt. The white borders around each print distracted from, rather than enhanced, the print.

"Thinking Inside the Box," by Jeri Riggs, is a masterful example of innovative use of traditional quilt techniques. While the palette of vibrant, saturated pure color is not to this reviewer's taste, it works well for Riggs and speaks to a well-developed personal aesthetic. Gloria Hansen brings computer-manipulated patterning to her exploration of the quilt form in

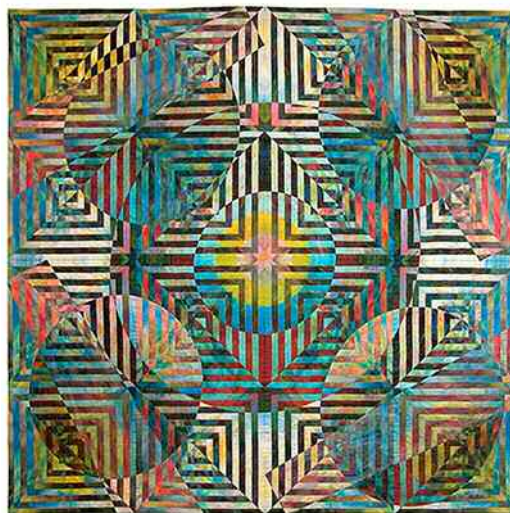
"Squared Illusions IV and V."\* The tightly-controlled and well-thought-out quilting is a perfect example of the use of the quilting line as an integral part of the artwork, rather than as unrelated afterthought.

As a whole, the exhibition is uneven and slightly disappointing. While artist's statements were plentiful, curatorial statements exploring the styles being surveyed were in short supply. Questions as to why particular pieces were included went unanswered, and this further weakened the exhibition. ▼

\*To see full-color images of these quilts, go to [www.saq.com](http://www.saq.com) and look for the "Fiber Revolution: A Survey of Styles" review under **Information > Exhibition Reviews**.



Far left: **Thinking Inside the Box**  
55" h x 55" w  
© 2001 Jeri Riggs  
www.jeririggs.com



Left: **Squared Illusions IV**  
47" h x 47" w  
© 2003 Gloria Hansen  
www.gloriahansen.com



# Meet your regional representatives

## Peg Keeney

Michigan SAQA Co-Representative



My art examines issues and ideas around our collective human experience. I try to entice the viewer to come closer and enter my world, to appreciate its

mystery and wonder. I tend to work intuitively and quickly, building my images layer by layer, freely cutting a combination of hand-dyed, hand-painted, and commercial fabrics, in addition to other more unusual fibers. This method helps me attain the dynamics of energy and movement in my work. Most of my work is semi-realistic or abstract, drawing on memories of both my real and imaginary worlds.

For the past 4 years, I have been a full-time studio artist, living in beautiful northern Michigan. Locally, I am a member of Fabrications, but my connection with SAQA has provided me with a “lifeline” to the world of fine art and to a network of thoughtful, caring artists.

## PT Weeks

Michigan SAQA Co-Representative



As a fiber artist and a facilitator for the Center for Creative Experience (CCE), I bring a variety of life-long skills into play. My study of fiber arts began

at the knee of my Polish grandmother, who taught me at age nine to

love single-strand silk embroidery. Several positions in merchandising and interior design led me to explore the effects of color and texture from a three-dimensional point of view.

A career in photography exposed me to the science of color mixing and taught me to see the quality of various wavelengths of light. Studies of world art, history, archeology, botany, religion, and philosophy have exposed me to the symbolic nature of colors and ethnic symbols and have helped me to recognize the universal combinations used by various cultures to create the artwork that strikes a familiar chord in each of us.

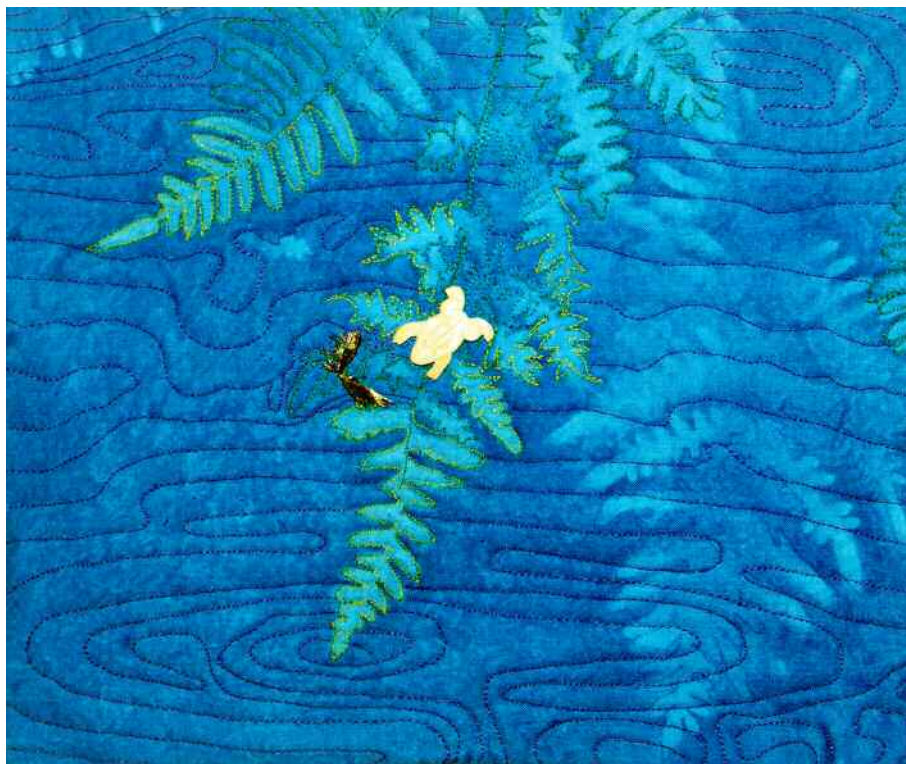
My life revolves around my artwork. The older I get, the fewer things outside of my work tempt me! I exhibit to share my experience and teach to pass on that experience. As I teach, the evolution of my process of creativity becomes stripped down to the simplest forms.



*Through the Grass*  
36" h x 27" w © Peg Keeney  
[www.pegkeeney.homestead.com](http://www.pegkeeney.homestead.com)

## *Cerulean Blue*

© pt Weeks





**Dancing Spheres, 48" h x 24" w**  
© 2004 Carol L. Myers, [www.carollmyers.net](http://www.carollmyers.net)

## Judy Langille

Connecticut/New Jersey/Delaware  
SAQA Representative



I graduated from SUNY at New Paltz with a B.S. in Art Education and continued on to get my Master's degree at Queens College. My interest in art quilts grew as I resumed teaching elementary school art. During this period, I organized many school-wide programs where children and teachers could work collectively on the production of community quilts. I also received several grants, including one from the Geraldine Dodge Foundation, for my work in integrating the arts into the

school curriculum. I left full-time teaching to concentrate more intensely on my evolving interest in contemporary fiber arts.

Today I live in Glen Ridge, New Jersey, where I work extensively with fabric dyeing and printing and using thermofax and photo silkscreen techniques. My fiber art has been juried into many national and regional shows, including Quilt National and Fine Focus 2002 and 2004. These works continue to travel around the country. I have been teaching textile design at William Patterson University and the Newark Museum Arts Workshop. I am an active participant in the Morris County Crafts Awareness Program, which features selected artists in residence. I will also be teaching and working as an artist in residence in additional public schools in the coming year.

See "Regional Reps" on page 26

## Carol L. Myers

Indiana/Ohio SAQA Representative



I'm the new SAQA Rep for the Indiana-Ohio region. Printmaking, textiles, and sewing have always been important to me, and fiber art has

been a focus for the last 15 years. I have a B.F.A. from the University of Michigan with a focus in printmaking and became a full-time studio artist four years ago. I am the fiber artist in residence at the Indianapolis Art Center and manage the fiber art gallery.

My artwork has been shown nationally and is represented in private and corporate collections. My current challenge is merging my interests in printmaking and fiber, as well as promoting SAQA and fiber art.



**Torn Forms**  
41" h x 32" w  
© Judy Langille  
[www.FiberRevolution.com](http://www.FiberRevolution.com)



## Regional Reps from page 25



**Rejoice**  
© Christine Adams

### Christine Adams

Pennsylvania/Maryland/  
Washington DC/West Virginia  
SAQA Co-Representative



In February 2000 I began teaching the Artist in Residence Program at the Hebrew Home of Greater Washington. I bring innovative and caring therapeutic art techniques to the classroom and directly to residents who cannot leave their rooms. My programming includes tours with the residents to artist studios, museums, and art centers. A varied experience is provided for both staff and residents through visiting artists and multimedia programming including collage, textiles, clay, paper mache, paint, pastels, and performance.

Recently I completed a Master's in Fine Arts and Medicine at Goddard College. I finished a three-year advanced course of study in Surface Design and Textile Arts in 1992. Lesley Riley and I plan to host a SAQA Regional meeting this year.

### Lesley Riley

Pennsylvania/Maryland/Washington DC/  
West Virginia SAQA Co-Representative



Working within the confines of my bedroom means that my quilts are small, but they pack a lot of meaning into every inch. My methods and techniques are a result of the fragments of time I have available.



### My Mother Before Me

47" h x 38" w  
© Leslie Riley  
[www.lalaland.com](http://www.lalaland.com)

A love of mixed media, books, and fabric, as well as quilts, has pushed me in new directions as I try to combine them all into meaningful fiber pieces. In my first book, *Quilted Memories*, I share my techniques on collage, image transfer, and simple quilt finishes. A second book, *Fabric Memory Books*, describes how-to for 24 unique fabric books.

In my position as Arts Editor for *Cloth Paper Scissors*, I'm always on the lookout for new talent and exciting art to share with my readers. As the Regional Co-Rep for SAQA, I hope to gather members together this year for a meet & greet, show & tell, and an exchange of ideas. ▼

# Appraisals: What is your work worth?

By Shelly Zegart, SAQA Sponsor  
www.shellyquilts.com

**T**he appraisal is a valuation in which a diverse number of factors are considered by the appraiser and analyzed in written form. These factors include the purpose of the appraisal, the market in which the object (quilt) is being valued, the market in which the object (quilt) was purchased, the market in which you may want to sell the object (quilt), the type of valuation applied and the valuation approach used by the appraiser.

Among the many purposes requiring appraisals for quilts and other objects are insurance, charitable donation for which a tax deduction can be claimed, estate tax, gift tax, equitable distribution in divorce, or liquidation.

Each of these purposes may require a different type of value, such as replacement value, fair market value, marketable cash value, or liquidation value. Legal requirements vary about what each type of appraisal should contain. Every object in the world has a large array of different values for different purposes.

The three most common types of appraisals for personal property and household contents are:

## 1. Insurance/Replacement Value

According to Terry King, past chairman of the International Personal Property Committee of the American Society of Appraisers, “[a]n insurance appraisal should actually describe what the appraiser found in the marketplace that would satisfy the loss of your [quilt] for example. It does not reflect what you could get for that particular [quilt] but rather what you would pay to acquire another one. In other words, what would it take to pry an equally satisfying [quilt] from someone else’s hands and put it into

your hands? This amount might be considerably more than you could have received for your [quilt] on the auction block.”\*

## 2. Fair Market Value

King explains that fair market value “is used in the courts to settle disputes and is an ideal, or perfect-world, value. It assures that you and the government can get a fair shake.”\*

It is the fair market value that, according to Karen Carolan, chief of art advisory services at the Internal Revenue Service and chair of the ARS

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*“There are no simple answers (for the quilt maker) unless your work has a marketable cash value.”*

*—Penny McMorris*

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Art Advisory Panel, “is the one and only value that we use for evaluating charitable gifts and for determining estate/gift taxes.”\* The IRS looks at the value in the specific marketplace where the item is most commonly sold at retail. The tax code states: “The fair market value is the price at which the property would change hands between a willing buyer and a willing seller, neither being under any compulsion to buy or sell and both having reasonable knowledge of relevant facts.”\*

## 3. Equitable Distribution Value

This dollar evaluation is the type of appraisal you would need if you were looking to divide up assets — perhaps during the dissolution of a marriage.

For the studio art quilter, the needs are somewhat different. A variety of options are available for a quilt maker working today, none of which are perfect. “There are no simple answers (for the quilt maker) unless your work has a marketable cash value,” says SAQA Board Member Penny McMorris.

In the art world, a prize at a quilt show means nothing. What matters is a sales and exhibition record. Values are determined by the marketplace. The appraiser for your art quilt must have a fairly extensive background in art and textile history to determine where the piece fits in the larger art world, past and present.

Appraisals are done to establish real value. If a person has paid too much for a quilt, a piece of real estate, a painting, a car, or anything else, and an appraiser is asked to evaluate the property, he/she is ethically bound to give its fair market value regardless of what the client paid for it and whether it is worth less or more than the purchase price. When a prize-winning quilt is appraised, it must be ranked against all similar quilts whether or not they have won prizes. It has simply earned its maker or owner a money prize. Fair market value is not what you paid for your quilt nor what prizes it has won. Fair market value is determined by how it compares to other quilts of similar types in places it is normally sold by willing sellers to willing buyers not under pressure to sell.

The appraiser must be aware of the market (public and private sale) on a daily basis. Therefore, dealers often make good appraisers because their livelihood depends on being able to

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See “Appraisals” on page 30



## Art Career from page 1

because it is a way to make something where she is in control, and the result is "all me."

Since Einstein and Williamson are both known for their highly successful series work, one interesting question was, "[H]ow do you know when it is time to move on?" Einstein said she works on an idea as long as the motivation continues and moves on when she is "sick of it." Williamson tends to stay with a series for several years at a time. After three years of working on her Construction Fence series, she has recently begun working on an offshoot series, much smaller and more delicate variations which she calls skeletal fences. Although Fine has not worked in a series, she tends to make several quilts from the same array of fabrics selected for one quilt, fully exploring a particular color palette before moving on.

When asked how where she has lived has influenced her artwork,

Williamson described her thoughts about her studio. The small dimensions of her original in-home studio limited the physical size of her quilts. In the past few years, her son left for college, and she has claimed more space for her work. But rather than cause a change in the scale of her quilts, it has allowed her to increase her production. Now, she uses one space for her art making and another space for the business end of being an artist. Williamson finds that keeping things visually separated has allowed her to focus on the task at hand without distractions.

When thinking about the impact of location on her artwork, Einstein reflected on the openness of America, which she found to be a land of possibilities and a place where it was acceptable for her to make art. In her native Switzerland, she had trained as a medical technician and, with no formal art training, art making was discouraged. Once in the States, she

tried weaving and other crafts before turning to quilt making. She, too, initially had a small studio and described her feelings of validation and understanding when family circumstances allowed her to build a larger studio space in her home.

Fine said that New England is particularly inspiring to her because there are a large number of quilters working in all styles, a well-developed guild system, and a large number of venues in which to see quilts.

When asked, "How do you know which opportunities to embrace?," Williamson told a cautionary tale of an almost-missed opportunity in her past. In the mid-'90s, Robert Shaw asked her several times for photographs of her artwork for a book he was writing. She initially failed to take his requests seriously but luckily sent images in time for inclusion in Shaw's *The Art Quilt*, the definitive history of the medium published in 1997. Williamson advised partici-

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### **AU NATURALE: Visions of Nature**

A juried and judged exhibition. Quilts chosen for this exhibit may be representational or abstract, but must include some aspect of nature as the subject.

**Entry deadline, June 26, 2005.**



### **EXPRESSIONS: The Art Quilt**

A worldwide, biennial juried and judged art quilt contest and traveling exhibition. The innovative works selected for this exhibit should be indicative of the diversity of art quilts and demonstrate the unique methods utilized in the medium of quilting today. Best of Show - \$2000

**Entry deadline, July 21, 2006**



### **Winter Wonderland: Quilted Dreamscapes**

A juried and judged exhibition of quilts with winter themes. Quilts may be abstract or representational, but winter themes should be evident.

**Entry deadline, November 27, 2006**



**For a complete list of upcoming shows, guidelines, rules, entry forms, and timelines visit: [www.rickytimes.com](http://www.rickytimes.com), then Shows and Competitions.**

Email:  
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pants to take advantage of unexpected opportunities to showcase their work, to network with other artists, and to keep “plugging away.”

Goal-setting was another topic the audience members were interested in. Fine’s goal seemed the most universally shared: she expressed a desire to find “my voice — a recognizable style that reflects who I am.” Fine said she knows that in order to find her voice, she must first go into the studio, shut the door, and do the work.

Einstein dreams of a career retrospective exhibition at the Fuller Craft Museum or the American Museum of Art and Design. More intriguing, however, was her willingness to express the hugely optimistic goal of making “one more great artwork” in a tone that sounded both humble and confident.

Williamson, coming off what most would consider a career high (Quilt National ’05 Best of Show, cover of the QN ’05 catalog, gallery sales, and several other prestigious shows), still has many goals. She reminded the audience that art-making is a journey in which one experiences learning and growth and engages in experimentation and play. She considers herself in the middle of her journey. She has been seeking a publisher for a book for a long time and expressed frustration with that process since the orientation of many publishers is towards project-oriented books. Williamson wants to continue to explore opportunities in the larger art world, entering art shows rather than art quilt shows

When asked, “What do you struggle with?,” Einstein said she has a list of 100 ways to get into your studio (by art quilter Damaris Jackson) that she reads on those days she can’t get going. She admitted that artistic blocks, arthritis, and energy problems often interfere with working. With a studio in a central location in her home, Williamson has to juggle household distractions. Since 1999, she’s disciplined herself and jump-started her creativity by making a quilt a week. Despite her love of and

longstanding use of the textile medium, she considers her use of fabric the source of struggle every day. She feels that if she had worked on paper, she would be further along in her career. Fine struggles with time management and recommended that participants spend less time on the computer.

Einstein said that the best advice she ever received was “keep looking.” She added her own advice, which was, “Do not look solely at quilts. Look at all art forms. Look at nature. Be true to yourself, even if your artwork is not fashionable. Be true to your own style.” Williamson said the best advice she received was “understand your own artwork enough to know how to present it.”

Williamson went to art school and majored in textiles and has not taken quilt classes from other quilters. She advised participants to focus on art and design classes and to forego quilt classes.

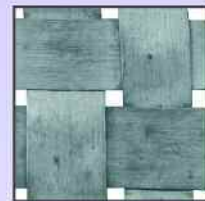
Fine, on the other hand, has taken classes with many leading art quilters, which she considers part of her training as a judge and an informal art education. In those classes, she has learned techniques that she can draw upon for her own artwork. Fine also reads extensively about art theory and criticism and enjoys discussing quilts and other art with colleagues whose opinions she values. She finds evaluating her own responses to the art of others enhances her ability to communicate through her own images.

Interestingly, the Q&A session was almost over before the subject of money came up. Bemoaning the low income derived from her quilt-making career, Williamson said that she would not have gotten into this art form if money was her only goal, but she reminded everyone that most artists feel the same way. Art is something that one is driven to make, and you find a way to structure your life to support that drive. Einstein admitted that she earns more from teaching than from quilt sales. Fine explained how she supports her fabric-buying

habit by earning judging and lecturing fees.

Einstein suggested looking at the prices charged by other artists you feel are at your skill level and then to value your artwork similarly. She uses a price-per-square-foot formula for her pieces. Williamson agreed, saying that her same-sized pieces are all priced the same. Both artists reminded the audience to be consistent in their pricing and to reevaluate their prices periodically.

It was exciting to be in a space where so many little epiphanies were experienced in such a short time. There has always been a rhythm to quiltmaking in New England. As the days get shorter and colder with the approach of winter, quilters hunker down and warm themselves with their work. Forty-five of those quilt artists will also be warmed with the knowledge that even when they are doing their solitary work in their studios this winter, they are not alone. ▼



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## Web Site from page 7

by galleries and museums around the world." She adds that keywords or metatags in the site's coding help guide curators and gallery owners to art that represents special themes.

If you teach, a site can publicize your areas of specialization, teaching schedule, and contract details. Guilds can easily find you, and local through international teaching opportunities can come your way. Karen Eckmeier ([www.quilted-lizard.com](http://www.quilted-lizard.com)) says, "99.9% of my teaching invitations come through my site." Because of their sites, Bob has been invited to teach in England and the Netherlands, Deana will teach in New Zealand in 2007, Australian quilter Wendy toured the U.S. as a teacher, and Carolyn Lee is artist-in-residence for an annual world cruise. Each year, she travels the world by sea for four months because the cruise ship company searched the Internet and found her site.

Interviews for books and magazines and invitations for television appearances can come from having a site. Curators, gallery owners, and guild members may see these publications, visit your site for more information, and offer additional opportunities for exhibiting, selling, and teaching.

Carol says her site keeps her organized in other ways. "It forces me to update and add new artwork as soon as it's done." The Yellowjackets Jazz Quartet purchased a quilt from her and used it on the cover of their new CD. This led to quilt sales to Children's Hospital of Boston.

Karen reminds us to protect our copyrights. She allowed a Greek magazine publisher to use an image of her quilt "Positive Energy" in an article on positive thinking. However, she did a Google search last year and found one of her pieces on a bootleg CD.

You can have a presence on the Internet without setting up your own

site. Many of you already have that through your SAQA PAM membership. Explore local and regional guilds, photo album sites, blogs, and textile arts and mixed media artists' registries. Posting on these sites increases your online presence. Online links are invaluable, connecting and facilitating movement from one site to another. All these web activities add up to substantial promotion of your art.

If you have been debating the question of having a web site, there is no time like the present. The benefits of web site ownership far outweigh the difficulties of establishing one. Carol says, "Stop procrastinating and 'Just do it!' The rewards will be worth the time and trouble." Isn't it about time you set up YOUR site?!? ▼

## Appraisals from page 27

assess accurately the current value of objects every day. Current values cannot be learned from price guides. The appraiser's knowledge of the laws is gained through both serious study and practical experience.

Insurance appraisals of quilts "you have made" are particularly difficult if you have no sales or exhibition history. If you have made a quilt and you have no sales or exhibition history, the appraisal is handled in the same way as that of any other piece of art created by a living artist with no sales or exhibition history: you can only insure it for the cost of the materials used in its creation. For donation purposes, the same rules apply — material costs only.

Never forget that an insurer will sell you all the insurance you want, up to market value. If your quilt is damaged or lost, and you do not have a good visual documentation, as well as a well-written complete appraisal, you lose. This protection is for you, the owner, not the insurance company. ▼

\*Quotes originally obtained for article published in the IQA Journal, International Quilt Association, Houston, Texas, Fall 1997

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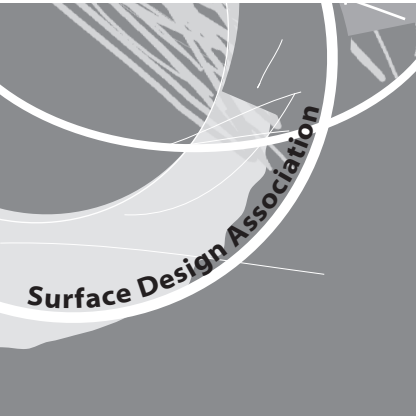
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Studio Art Quilt Associates, Inc. is a non-profit organization, whose mission is to promote the art quilt through education, exhibitions, professional development and documentation.

The SAQA Journal is published four times a year. Deadlines for articles are May 1st, July 1st, October 1st, and December 1st. Email articles to Editor Carolyn Lee Vehslage at [CLVquilts@yahoo.com](mailto:CLVquilts@yahoo.com)

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