

# SAQQA *Journal*

Studio Art Quilt Associates, Inc. ▲▲▲ Volume 17, No. 2 ▲▲▲ Spring 2007



**Summer Nights**  
by Katie Pasquimi Masopust

*see story, page 7*

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## Thoughts from the SAQA president

by Katie Pasquini Masopust  
www.katiepm.com



I am very pleased to welcome Nelda Warkentin to the board. Nelda is a wonderful artist and a long-time volunteer for SAQA, as the Pacific Zone coordinator and as Alaska regional rep-

resentative. Nelda brings a talent for organization and a broad-based knowledge of the art world to her new position.

Beth Smith will be stepping down from the board after 4½ years of dedicated service. We will miss her and the knowledge that she brought to the board. Beth will be busy overseeing the renovations of the Oceanside

Museum where Visions takes place. Thank you for everything, Beth.

I must thank all of the members who donated the 12-inch squares for our auction at the SAQA Conference at *Quilt National '07*. They are fantastic!

And speaking of donations, I am very pleased that SAQA is operating at such a healthier fiscal level than it has in the past. Donations were up in 2006 — we had 14 corporate sponsors, up from 6 the previous year. We had great sponsorship from Janome for the *Creative Force* exhibition at Houston and its catalog. There were also 84 individual donors in 2006. This is impressive!

Donations are what allow us to have exhibitions with catalogs, implement improvements in the *Journal*, and to help the different regions with their activities. So the more dona-

tions we get, the more we can do for our members. Consider making a tax-deductible contribution in 2007. Every penny helps to promote the art quilt.

We have new individual donor categories:

Friend: \$50  
Sponsor: \$100  
Patron: \$500  
Benefactor: \$1,000  
Leader: \$2,500  
Founder's Circle: \$5,000  
Angel: \$10,000

Remember: these tax deductible contributions help you as well as all artists and the art quilt. To make a donation, go to <https://www.SAQA.com:444/donations.aspx>.

Here's hoping you create meaningful work all year long.

## Letter to the Editor

With respect to the review in the Winter 2007 SAQA *Journal* by Maxine Farkas on *Art Quilts at the Whistler*, I have a "different strokes for different folks" comment about her response to Barbara Jade Triton's poetic artwork *Brooklyn Bench*.

On page 21, Maxine says, "While the overlay of stitched branches was either mildly unsettling (why were bare branches throwing shadows of leaves?) or an unfortunate addition that lacks verisimilitude, they did not detract from the central iconic image."

I offer my own answer to Maxine's question of why the bare branches were throwing shadows of leaves.

I find nothing unfortunate in *Brooklyn Bench*. Instead I find only the artist's rich and deep reflections on connections between nature and people that she provides by means of her artwork's imagery. I find it moving, profound, and above all central to

Barbara's image that branches that look dead in winter should be capable of casting a living shadow.

The bare branches that throw shadows of leafed-out branches on a park bench refer to the bench as timeless and dynamic, as a person that has seen and heard much over many seasons. An empty bench is above all a powerful sign of human presence, implied, alluded to, expected, absent, transient. The tree has supplied the bench materials which are now far from being dead wood. The living green of the branches shadowed imaginatively on the bench is a reflection of the lives of the people who rest, have rested, or will rest there, and of the tree's own passing seasons — for even though the landscape lives long, like people, it is not forever. If the leaves and branches depicted in the artwork serve to refer to human presences, it is precisely because of Barbara's branch imagery

that we may view deeper layers in the idea of a bench as "iconic." Hence I feel that any lack of verisimilitude is a virtue in the artwork.

Wendy Feldberg  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada



*Brooklyn Bench*, © 2006 Barbara Jade Triton

# Report from the SAQA executive director

by Martha Sielman, [www.marthasielman.com](http://www.marthasielman.com)



I've been working hard on the tentatively titled *Masters: Art Quilts* book that Lark Books is publishing. It's an exciting project, and I can't wait

to see the finished book.

As a result of my work on this project, I had to write this column about the importance for every artist of having a web site. If you are a professional artist who wishes to promote your artwork, the care and feeding of a web site is critical. I know from personal experience that web sites are a tremendous amount of work, that they need constant care, and that they crash periodically just to cause you to get more gray hair.

However, they are now what business cards and postcards have always been for professional artists — a necessary component to promoting your work.

As curator of the *Masters* book for Lark, I had to draft an initial list of 50

master art quilters, from which they chose the final 40. After looking through my collection of books, magazines, art quilt exhibition catalogs, and lists of *Quilt National* and *Visions* exhibitors, and consulting with a variety of other people, I came up with a list of names. But then I had to provide the Lark Books editors with evidence as to why I was recommending those artists be included in their book. When an artist had a web site, it was easy — I just provided the link. But fifteen of the fifty artists didn't have web sites. I knew that they were fantastic artists and that they deserved to be included in the *Masters* book, but unless I was going to ship my home library down to North Carolina, I couldn't show Lark these artists' artwork. Almost as importantly, the editors and I couldn't find contact information for these artists to let them know that we wished to invite them to participate.

If you cannot do anything else, at the very least become a SAQA PAM and post two images of your work in the SAQA web site gallery, along with your contact information. But if at all possible, invest

in a web site and update it every few months. Dena Crain wrote a very good article surveying SAQA members about their web sites in the Winter 2006 issue of the *Journal* (available on the web site in the Members section). There were members who invested time and built their own web sites, and there were members who preferred to hire an expert. I used Gloria Hansen of GloDerWorks to create my personal web site, and while it still involved a large amount of time, I didn't have to learn more than some editing basics.

Having a web site allows people who cannot come to your latest exhibition to enjoy your artwork. Having a web site allows people who have taken a class from you or read about you in a magazine to learn more about what you create. Having a web site allows people who have fallen in love with your artwork to consider buying some of it for their homes or businesses (so put your prices out there!). And having a web site lets opportunities come knocking. If you don't yet have a web site, now's the time.



## From the editor

by Carolyn Lee Vehslage  
[www.clvquilts.com](http://www.clvquilts.com)

The *SAQA Journal* keeps evolving to better suit our members' needs. Last spring, we made the leap to a full-color *Journal* to better show off art quilts. With the Winter issue, we switched from plain to glossy paper, which greatly improved the image quality of the quilts.

Now we've added a members' gallery section. Within this issue are art quilts that feature the theme of Springtime. We will follow them up this year with Summer Scenes, Autumn Splendor, and Winter Solstice. Please watch your SAQA e.Bulletins for submission deadlines.

In this issue, you'll be able to read about my adventures on the high seas as an onboard artist in residence. Twice, I had the privilege of cruising around the world on the *Crystal Serenity* and leading 4-month-long quilting projects.

Remember, all the *Journals* from the last two years are located in the Members section on the SAQA web site.

## Report from the SAQA exhibits committee

By Judith Content, vice president, exhibits committee chair

### Committee news

I want to thank Rose Hughes, SAQA coordinator of national exhibitions, for her efforts processing the entries for *Transformations '07*. With the help of Susan Willen and Lori Ruggles, she made a difficult job seem easy. In response to the problems she encountered with some of the images submitted via CD, she has written an article for this issue of the *SAQA Journal* on how to submit images digitally for jury selection. I'm sure her article will be of assistance to many of our members, including myself.

It is my pleasure to welcome Linda Colsh to the exhibits committee and announce her new role as chair of a subcommittee on international exhibitions. Linda lives in Brussels and is well respected by both the American and European art quilt communities. She did an exceptional job coordinating the *Breaking Boundaries* SAQA exhibition in Lyon, and I am certain she will assist us a great deal on issues related to international exhibitions.

### Regional SAQA exhibitions:

I am delighted to announce that the exhibits committee has endorsed two new proposals for regional SAQA exhibitions. We have accepted Susan Crouse Kemp's proposal for an exhibition titled *Flow* for the Mountain Zone: Montana, Idaho, Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and Wyoming.. This exhibition will take place July 20 – August 5, 2007, at the Translations Gallery in Denver, Colorado.

The exhibits committee has also accepted Susan Sanborn North's proposal for an exhibition titled *SAQA: Balancing Act*. This exhibition is open to SAQA members residing in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Ontario, Canada. It will take place in September, 2007, at the Lawrence Street Gallery in Ferndale, Michigan. Congratulations,

and thank you both for putting together such professional proposals.

By the time this *Journal* is published, a number of forms designed by the exhibits committee dealing with exhibition issues will be available in the Members section of the website or directly from Martha Sielman. We have designed a form with approval guidelines for SAQA-sponsored regional exhibitions as well as forms outlining exhibition proposals, approaching venues, budget guidelines, tips for jury administration, tips for curators, a checklist for exhibition coordinators, a media contact list, an artist checklist, and sample forms such as acceptance and rejection letters, entry forms, loan agreements, and a list of recommended jurors. The entire committee worked hard on this project, with special help from Kim Ritter, Arlene Blackburn, Rose Hughes, and Martha Sielman. If you have additional questions, please contact Peg Keeney, exhibits mentor. She will know how to direct your questions and find you assistance.

### Transformations '07: Reverberations

I want to thank the 131 SAQA members who submitted entries to *Transformations '07: Reverberations* and congratulate the 24 artists who were selected by our juror, Dr. Sandra Sider. The exhibition will open in August at the Festival of Quilts in Birmingham, England. It will also travel to the Crooked Tree Arts Center in Petoskey, Michigan, January-March 2008. Kathie Briggs, SAQA's exhibits committee travel coordinator, is working on finding additional travel venues at this time.

When we invited Sandra to jury *Transformations '07*, we gave her a straightforward mandate: to select artwork that is compelling, contem-

porary, and cutting edge. Sandra completed the jurying and subsequently gave the exhibition a subtitle:

**Reverberations**. I was intrigued and wanted to know how she came up with this name.

Sandra wrote, "My goal in jurying this exhibition was to select a group of quilts in which ideas or emotions were successfully expressed through color, line, and texture. I looked for quilts in which artists had grappled with concept or emotion, creating surfaces that enabled viewers to respond to the thought behind the art."

She went on to discuss the works she selected and the relationships she perceived between the individual quilts. Selections from Sandra's commentary include, "Liz Axford's felted *Alchemy* with its stately, golden squares balances the taut, rhythmic motion of squares in Eleanor McCain's *Color Grid Study 2*. In *Pyramid Reflections #5*, Dan Olfe used many-hued triangular overlays to build an intricate geometric surface, while Eileen Lauterborn, in *Unknown Territory*, let color run rampant in linear exuberance. Death is embraced lovingly in Susan Shie's ode to the compost pile, and Pat Kroth's *Midnight Jambalaya* ebulliently recycles the flotsam of daily life."

In conclusion, Sandra wrote, "My subtitle for the exhibition, **Reverberations**, resulted from the visual dialogues between the various quilts, which became evident during the jurying process. Through shape, color, texture, or idea, these works speak to each other in the archetypal language of quilts." Sandra has also helped design the installation of this show — juxtaposing pieces to facilitate their reverberations. Thank you, Sandra, for providing an extra layer of significance to *Transformations '07*.

See "Exhibits" on page 28

## Board report

By Penny McMorris, secretary

Based on response from you, the SAQA members, the board worked this winter on ways to get more member representation on the board and offer more exhibition and learning opportunities. We have invited PAM Nelda Warkentin to join the board, filling the vacancy left by the death of Hilary Fletcher. Board treasurer Nancy Brakensiek has written officer job descriptions to help the nominating committee know what each board job entails and what skill sets are needed, as we fill upcoming board positions.

As a way to market SAQA as an organization and the work of its PAM members, we continue to put the *Portfolio* books into the hands of curators and collectors. We have sent a copy of *Portfolio 13* to each of the Friends of Fiber Art board members, as well as people on their list of the top 200 collectors. Because of the success of *Portfolio 13*, we decided to print *Portfolio 14* in 2007. Cheryl Ferrin is again organizing and designing the book.

SAQA was represented at the International Quilt Festival in Chicago this April with a booth and the following three lectures: Cheryl Ferrin on portrait art quilts; Beth Ann St. George on art as meditation; and Debra Danko on floral painting art quilts.

The exhibits committee has been very active planning the following exhibitions that will open over the next several years:

- *Transformations 07: Reverberations*
- *Balancing Act*, open to the greater Michigan region
- *Flow* exhibition, to be held in Denver
- *Creative Force 2007* at International Quilt Festival in Houston
- *12 Voices*, to be held Sept. – Nov. 2008.

To promote future exhibitions, Judith Content, chair of the exhibits committee, gave a presentation to Deborah Corsini, the new curator of the San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles. They are looking at 2009 exhibition possibilities. Be sure to see Judith's column for more exhibition details, and the SAQA Web site for full information on all of these shows.

## SAQA's 2006 budget report

by Nancy Brakensiek, treasurer

Fiscal year 2006 saw continued growth as membership increased from 1,250 to 1,600. Janome America made a flagship gift to support the SAQA: *The Creative Force* exhibit at the International Quilt Festival in Houston, as well as paying for the catalog and donating to the general fund. The first SAQA lecture series brought in additional corporate sponsors. Early registrations for the 2007 Conference came in throughout the fall. *Portfolio 13* was a hot seller, as were catalogs from *Transformations '06* and SAQA: *The Creative Force*.

### 2006 Sources of funds:

|                                   |          |
|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Membership dues                   | \$81,885 |
| 2007 Conference registration fees | 18,218   |
| Donations – Individuals           | 11,278   |
| Donations – Corporate             | 51,105   |
| Exhibition fees                   | 10,535   |
| Product sales and other income    | 18,401   |
| Interest on savings accounts      | 1,199    |
| Funds held for Fiber Revolution   | 3,950    |

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**Total sources of funds** **\$196,571**

### 2006 Uses of funds:

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| Member services, including SAQA Journal, Portfolio 13, web site | \$42,428 |
| Administrative expenses, including executive director salary    | 76,194   |
| Exhibition expenses   | 62,187   |
| Board of directors meeting expenses                             | 2,090    |
| Expenses against Fiber Revolution fund                          | 3,519    |

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**Total uses of funds** **\$186,418**

**Sources of funds in excess of uses of funds** **\$10,153**

### Bank Account balances as of 12/31/2006

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| Liberty Bank – SAQA checking                                      | \$12,399 |
| Liberty Bank – SAQA savings (savings, CREAM Fund, Education fund) | \$39,609 |
| Liberty Bank – Fiber Revolution                                   | \$4,350  |

# Demystifying composition

By Brett Barker

“Composition” has become a somewhat controversial subject in the art quilting world, and in the art world in general. From artists who espouse precise compositional “formulas” to those who say they do no composing, designing solely by intuition, ideas about composition run the gamut of experience. It’s hard for a quilter to know what to believe or where to begin.

Let’s start with some definitions. Webster describes composition as “the artistic arrangement of the parts of a picture.” I also like their alternate definition, “a thing composed of various elements.” When I teach quilters, I say that composition is “the arrangement of line, shape, and color.” This is the definition Katie Pasquini Masopust and I used in our book, *Color and Composition for the Creative Quilter*. We then described nine different ways that a quilt can be composed. While I have found this to be an extremely easy and useful way

to create an art quilt, I have now expanded my definition to include the ways in which composition requires both intellect and intuition.

When beginning an art quilt, the artist (that’s YOU!) first has an idea or concept that he or she wishes to communicate through art. Then the

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*How can the idea  
be communicated  
in a clear and  
harmonious way?*

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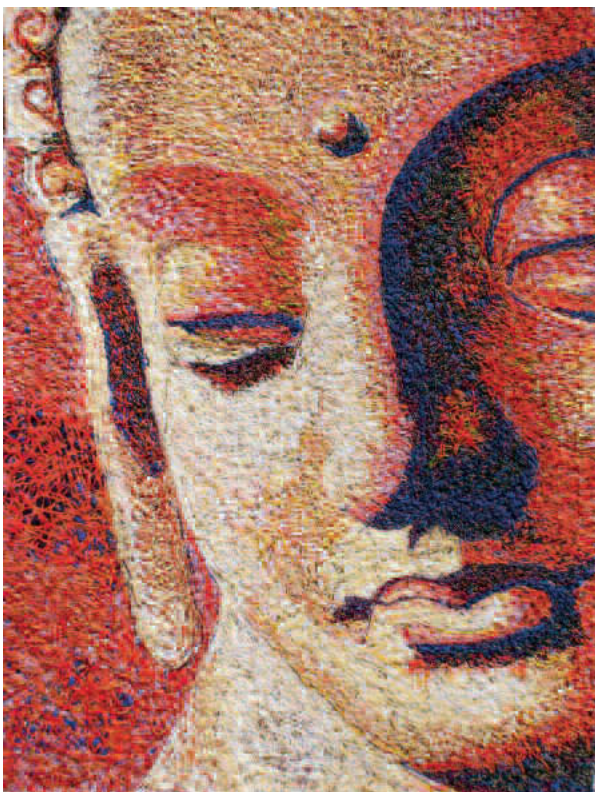
“thinking” begins — how will you translate this idea into a quilt? Right from the beginning, you are confronted with a series of questions or problems to solve. What size and proportion will best fit the idea? How will the space be divided? How will the elements fit within the arrangement? How can balance, movement, and variety be incorporated? How can the idea be communicated in a clear and harmonious way?

When I first sit down to create a piece, I like to simplify these questions; otherwise, I get so bogged

down in the formal considerations (the “stuff” I learned in art school) that I can hardly get started! There are numerous approaches for artists to explore; however, I recommend “playing around” with only one approach at a time. It is a great way to master composition without becoming overwhelmed.

One approach is to consider composition as a mixture of right and left-brain thinking, or your intellect coupled with your instinct. Almost everyone has a good sense of intuitive composition. Think about how you arrange your furniture, how you choose and arrange flowers, even how you “doodle” when talking on the phone. When teaching art to children, I often notice they have an intuitive sense about what should go where and how elements should be put together to form a cohesive whole. It’s only later that we talk ourselves out of our instinctual sense of good design. So how do you keep this “gut instinct” alive while composing? The answer is counter to what you might believe: by knowing and understanding some basic tenets of good design, you are then free to compose more intuitively. These tenets should be thought of not as rules, but as guidelines for good design.

The first thing I do when preparing for an art quilt, thread painting, or mixed media piece is to freely sketch out my elements, such as a face, a tree, or a flower, without any thought about the composition as a whole. This refines my idea about what I want in the piece and helps me decide how to divide the space later. I draw my elements several times and in several different ways (think DaVinci’s notebook). Often my first rendering is not my best; it is only after I’ve sketched an element four or five times that my idea becomes clear.



***Buddha III***, 9.5" x 7",  
© Brett Barker.  
Thread painting on  
canvas with silk.

See “Composition” on page 30

# Taking classes outside your medium

By Katie Pasquini Masopust

**M**y art quilts have improved as a result of taking classes outside our medium. A photography class I took over 10 years ago with Don Gregg has greatly improved my ability to take photos which I use as inspirations for my artwork.

Several years ago I started a series of chalk pastel classes with artist/instructor Brett Barker. Two of my chalk pastel paintings inspired two different series of my art quilts. Brett and I became great friends. We often studied show catalogs such as the *Visions* and *Quilt National* catalogs and discussed the color choices and compositional strength of the many art quilts.

Doing so inspired us to write a book on color and composition together. We hoped that this book would give the aspiring quilt artist some of the background and formal art considerations needed to create strong works of art. We have heard from many of you who have gone through the exercises in the book or who have taken the three-day workshop with us that the exercises have given you the knowledge and confidence to create stronger pieces. We are very pleased with the book's success. Two years later it is still selling well. Brett and I met out of my need to explore other mediums, and I am grateful for that meeting.

Next, I found a class at the community college titled "Advanced Painting with Jakki Kouffman." The medium was acrylic paints or chalk pastels. The class was held on a Wednesday, the one day of the week I am usually home and not on the road teaching. It turned out to be mainly a critique class. All of the students are very self-motivated. We paint at home during the week, then bring in our artwork and put it all on a huge wall in the front of the class. Jakki discusses our direction and technique, then encourages and helps us

to the next level.

I was struggling, feeling that my overall painting wasn't good, but I could usually crop it down to find a strong section. This is easy to do with pastel or watercolor paper, but difficult with stretched canvases. After sharing this with Jakki, her solution was simple: "Why don't you use unstretched canvas taped to a board

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*Painting gives me different avenues to explore my creativity and influences the direction of my fabric art quilts.*

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and cut it as you need it?" I began to paint more freely, cropping my paintings to become stronger compositions. One day in class, one of the other students had brought a painting that she didn't like until she had cut it into three sections and moved them around to create a more dynamic juxtaposition of colors and lines. I thought about cutting up my canvases and then reassembling them, like a quilt! I was off and running.

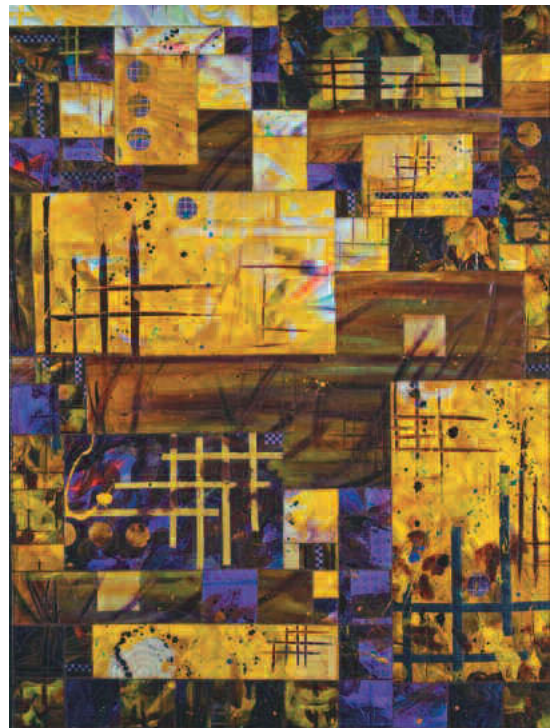
I now paint several large treated canvases (36" x 36") in a chosen

color scheme. I then search the finished canvases with my cropping tool for interesting sections. (The best cropping tool is a mat for framing pictures cut on two opposite corners to create two L shapes that can be moved around the canvas, opening and closing the window, depending on what shape is needed.)

I liken this cropping part of the process to writing chapters of a book. Each section tells a small part of the whole story. I play with the "chapters" on my pin-up wall, arranging them to create a composition. The edges are placed side by side and sewn with a zigzag stitch. I spray-baste batting and a backing of untreated canvas and free motion quilt. I then finish the piece with a satin stitch instead of a binding.

This year, I chose to enter three of these painted assemblages in *Quilt National*. They were not accepted. What do we all do when we are not accepted into a show? We analyze

See "Taking classes" on page 31



**Summer Nights**, 52" x 39",  
© Katie Pasquini Masopust.  
Acrylic painting on canvas  
cut up, reconstructed  
and quilted.

## Disciplined artwork

By Michael Naples

Recently, I have found my passion for art once again. For some time, it had been lost in the shuffle of my 9 to 5. For my birthday, I received a subscription to *Artist's Magazine*. I always look forward to its arrival in my mailbox. One particular issue had an article featuring an artist named Duane Keiser. As I read on, I learned of A Painting A Day. Duane would, on a daily basis, create a small, postcard-sized painting, usually a still life. His artwork made me think about “what if’s” and possibilities for my own.

Duane also listed his works on eBay, and was actually selling them for quite a nice profit. I have had commissions before, but to think that my artwork could be selling on a daily basis seemed pretty farfetched. I decided to give it a shot for a number of reasons, mainly because I felt I was letting my talent and education go to waste. Weeks could pass without my even picking up a pencil. So I decided to turn things around. I started with

daily charcoal drawings. I was happy with them, and at the very least, I was doing what I loved.

At first, I would list the drawings on eBay, and hope for the best. It started out slowly and frustrated me a little along the way. After drawing something, photographing it, and listing it on eBay and my blog, I would be in bed by 2 a.m. some nights. Then I sold a few pieces. I imagined the guy in New York who bought *Shot Glass* was proudly displaying it above his metro style bar in the middle of Manhattan.

Portraiture and drawing have been my main focus in the art world. I have dabbled in painting before, but my confidence was lacking when it came to thinking about actually sitting down and doing a Painting A Day. But I swallowed my pride and went for it. The outcome was better than I could have hoped. I was on to something. My days at work seemed never-ending; all I wanted to do was rush home to create that day’s painting.

With every day came improvements in my focus, my dedication, and my skills. I used to be afraid of color in my work. Now, I have overcome that and look for ways to add more color. I have successfully been able to list my Painting A Day work on Ebay, for a respectable commission. My buyers span the United States from Massachusetts to

California. I have even had a number of repeat customers. I’m not retiring yet, but I have created and sold more paintings in three months than I had in the three years before this challenge.

Along with eBay, Blogger.com has also been a positive outlet for showing my artwork. It is an online blogging community where I can upload each painting and create a link to my eBay auctions so purchasing is just a click away. It has been a great critiquing tool as well. Anyone can choose to subscribe to my daily blogs and will receive notice when a new painting is uploaded.

Many inspiring comments have been left on various pieces I have posted. With each painting and each day that passes, I try to improve not only the quality of my artwork but also the speed at which I create it.

The days of going to bed at 2 a.m. are over. I have literally cut my painting time in half. This daily practice has taught me to be more direct — to choose my brushstrokes wisely; to make one brushstroke create the same effect as three or more of my previous ones, to mix my colors and values accurately at the beginning so only minor adjustments have to be made throughout the painting.

Looking back, it is really quite amazing how the chance encounter with that small article truly changed my life as an artist. I now have realistic goals for what I want to achieve, and I’m getting closer to achieving them with every day that goes by. ▼

*Michael Naples is a professional artist with a studio in the Chicago area. His blog is [michaelnaples.blogspot.com](http://michaelnaples.blogspot.com).*



**Quilted**, 6 x 5, © 2007 Michael Naples. Oil on board.



# Sharon Heidingsfelder- Ammann

1950-2007

Sharon Heidingsfelder-Ammann was born June 28, 1950, in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. She passed away on Friday, January 19, 2007, following a long illness. Sharon graduated from Johnstown Central Senior High School, received her bachelor's degree in Consumer Related Studies – Housing and Interiors from Penn State University, and a master's degree in Crafts from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

After she retired from the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, where she served as the Extension Human Environment Specialist and Extension Crafts Specialist, Sharon worked as a graduate assistant at the Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts and as a graduate teaching assistant at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

Sharon was an experienced judge in the world of quilting and published several quilting books and other articles. Her quilts were juried into many prestigious exhibitions, including several *Quilt Nationals*. She combined her organization skills with her love of color and pattern to create fantastically detailed, energetic art quilts.

Sharon served on the SAQA board from 1999 to 2001, working on membership. In 2001 she became the executive director for SAQA, where she served for 3 years. Sharon kept SAQA organized and



spearheaded many innovative programs. Wendy Huhn, who served on the SAQA board with Sharon, called her “the glue of SAQA,” as she really held everything together during all of our changes.

Katie Pasquini Masopust reminisces that Sharon knew where everything was at all times. “She took great care with all of our members; SAQA meant so much to her. I still can hear her delightful laughter.”

She is survived by her loving husband Jack, who cared for her throughout her illness. We will miss Sharon — her smile and her wonderful way with people. We want to send our condolences to Jack Ammann and thank him for continuing to share Sharon’s quilts with us.

If you would like to make a donation in Sharon’s name, please send it to the SAQA Education Fund (SAQA, P.O. Box 572, Storrs, CT 06268).

## Entering juried quilt competitions

By Barbara Barrick McKie

**B**efore deciding if the competitive fray of juried quilt shows is for you, take time to examine some of the issues involved.

First, consider your goals for your quilting.

- Do you want to teach or lecture, particularly on a national circuit?
- Do you want to sell your quilts?
- Do you want some measure of satisfaction and confirmation that your artwork is good and competitive?

If these are among your goals, entering shows may be helpful to further them. If, however, your goals are to make quilts for family and friends and perhaps do a few commissions locally, or you just want to quilt for the pleasure of it, the costs and time required to enter shows may not be worth it to you.

Since I wanted to sell my artwork and get some recognition in the art-quilt world, I started entering shows in 1995. My first tries were not always successful, but more recently, my artwork has often been juried into the shows.

So, if you have decided that you do want to enter shows, what should you consider as you review the many opportunities?

A first step would be to compile a list of potential shows. Several lists can be found on the Internet. SAQA's website lists information under "Events: Calls for Entry" and under the member listings. Michelle Verbeeck's website, [www.michelleverbeeck.com](http://www.michelleverbeeck.com), has a "Call for Art" section; and Lyric Kinard's website, [www.lyrickinard.com](http://www.lyrickinard.com), under Links, then "Where to Show and See Art Quilts," has a nice complement of shows listed. *Surface Design Association Journal*, *Fiberarts Magazine*, *Professional Quilter Magazine*, and *Quilting Arts Magazine* all have calls

for entry sections. A broader listing for the general art world can be found in *Art Calendar Magazine* and *Art Deadlines*, [www.artdeadlineslist.com](http://www.artdeadlineslist.com), both available through subscription.

Before you enter any of these shows, however, I suggest that you attend one of the large quilt shows near you. The largest of them all is the International Quilt Festival in Houston. Others include the American Quilter's Society show in Paducah, Kentucky, and the several Mancuso Show Management ([www.quiltfest.com](http://www.quiltfest.com)) shows in Virginia, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Colorado, and California, as well as many others. If you wish to enter the very competitive art quilt shows, I suggest you attend *Quilt National* in Ohio or *Quilt Visions* in California. When there, assess honestly whether your artwork fits in both qualitatively and stylistically with those shown to better determine where your artwork fits.

I recall the first International Quilt Festival I attended in 1997. I was impressed with the quality and quantity of the quilting in the quilts on display. I immediately started doing more quilting on my artwork, which has helped my success rate. Another thing to note is how many entries are in the category where your artwork would fit. I have the misfortune of doing mostly pictorial work, and this is almost always the largest category. In fact, IQA has expanded the pictorial categories to include several variations. Since entry fees can be costly, taking the step to assess your chances is important.

Entry fees, shipping fees, and photography expenses are important considerations, and if you enter many shows as I do, it can add up to be the largest part of your quilting expenses. While I do my own photography in a professional way, the film, developing

of slides, and burning and mailing CDs still costs money and time. If you cannot do your own slides in a professional way, you must hire a professional to do it, adding even more to the cost. With some shows wanting slides and some requiring digital format, you will need to get both formats created or limit which shows you can enter. Don't enter non-professional slides because you are most likely wasting your entry fee, and you will get into only non-competitive opportunities.

Entry fees can vary from \$5-\$18 per entry. Most allow one to three entries for a typical fee of from \$25-\$35, with some as high as \$50 for three entries.

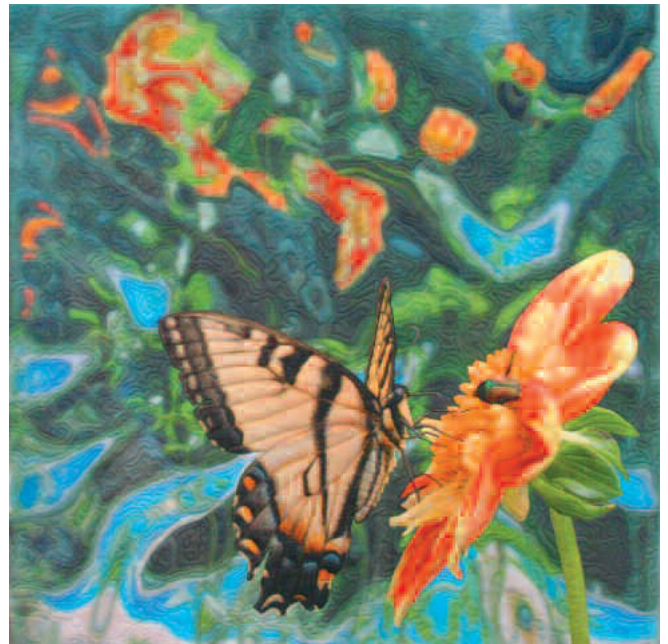
Shipping costs and distance are important considerations, since generally you will be required to pay shipping both ways. Will you be able to send a return shipping label, or will the show assess a fee for return? Usually it is less expensive to send a return shipping label than to pay some of the fees charged for return shipping. Some shows hire outside companies to repack and return the work and charge as much as \$45-\$60 for returning one piece, but most charge about \$20 per quilt for return or allow a return shipping label. I find it is costing me about \$8 to ship a small piece within one shipping zone to over \$20 to ship across country. I like to send my work rolled in a tube, as I've seen creases develop in artwork sent folded. Many shows encourage you to fold the artwork, however, because the long boxes can be problematic for them. An additional cost that might tip the balance against a show is a requirement that each quilt (if more than one is accepted) be shipped separately.

Other issues to evaluate before deciding to enter a particular show include:

## Duel for My Dahlias

43.5" x 43"

© 2005 Barbara Barrick McKie



- **Show preferences** — Does the show generally have abstract or unusual artwork such as *Fiberarts International* and to some extent *Quilt National*, or do they award their big prizes to traditional artwork?
- **What kind of artwork do you do?** Will there be lots of entries in that category? Do you want to change your style or focus to fit into the winning categories? Depending on your goals, your answer may be different.
- **Judges' preferences** — Have they liked your artwork in the past? Do they prefer abstract, pictorial, innovative, or traditional artwork?

Not the least of considerations, especially if you want to enter many shows, is to keep track of when the quilts will be needed, and if time requirements conflict. Will the delivery and return times fall when you will be away? If so, you may need to decline entering or make alternative plans to ensure proper delivery. Does one show overlap another? If so, which one is your priority? Keeping tabs on these conflicts can be complicated and confusing. It was for this reason that I eagerly agreed to spend my time working with Teri Galvin to define requirements and test her Quilt Pro program ([www.quiltpro.com](http://www.quiltpro.com)) for show entry requirements. Some of the data kept in this program illustrates the various issues that may affect your decision to enter one show or another.

- **How many shows can you enter?** Some suggest that you enter as many as you can to increase your chances and get more of the jurors' viewing time. Do make sure that all artwork is your best quality, however. If you don't have a lot of inventory, particularly recent work, you will be limited in the number of shows you can enter.

- **How many days to ship?** This could affect your availability as well as the shipping cost.
- **Is there prize money, and if so, how much?** This will give you a potential opportunity to get a return on your investment.
- **What are your chances of getting in?** If the usual number of entries vs. the number selected is high, your chances will be lower.
- **Is there a publication such as a book or catalogue?** This gives you a chance for recognition, but it usually drives up the number of entries. Examples are *Quilt National* and *Quilt Visions*.
- **What is the cost to enter?**
- **What is the cost of shipping?**
- **What are the limitations on entries?** Common limitations are size or date completed (usually the last 2 or 3 years, but sometimes the last 5 years or no limit on age of artwork). There may be theme limits as well.
- **Has the work been shown previously?** Generally, it isn't a good idea to show the same piece in the same area several times, and *Quilt National* requires that it not be seen previously, ever.
- **Will you need to ship the artwork twice?** Some shows require you to ship the quilt for final approval and/or photography for a publication, and then return it for a later show date.
- **Must or can the artwork be for sale?** What is the commission charged if sold? This can run from 10%-50%, and your pricing should take the maximum into consideration. If

the artwork is for sale at a show, it could prevent you from entering it in another show until the first show has been completed.

- **Are the dates for entry, jury notice, and receipt far apart?** This can prevent your quilt from being shown elsewhere, particularly if the artwork must be for sale, or if it will travel and be away for as long as two years. Sometimes an interim show can be entered if it doesn't require that the artwork be for sale.
- **Will attendees and the attention the show is given enhance your prestige and give you introduction to those collectors who might buy your artwork?**

OK, now you have entered and been juried into the show. Note on your calendar when you need to ship your artwork and when it will come back, and take note of the packing and paperwork requirements. Prepare your return labels, if needed. And good luck! ▼

*SAQA professional artist member Barbara Barrick McKie has been creating art quilts since 1971 and has been entering and showing her work in both gallery and juried shows since 1996. Her web site is [mckieart.com](http://mckieart.com).*

# Working with an art consultant

By Christina Saj

**A**rtists work out of an intense sense of conviction. I understand this because I am one of them. I soon realized that producing art was not enough. To make a living from art, I had to sell it. I had to admit that there were two ingredients for success: creativity and business. Thus, I redefined myself as an entrepreneur working in the arts.

Producing art is totally absorbing and intellectually challenging with efforts rewarded by public recognition of talent. Artists work on honing craft, developing a unique style, and studying earlier artists. But hard work and inspiration are not enough to assure success. One has to be practical. Surprisingly, artists are inherently suited to business. They are disciplined, open to learning new things, willing to take on all aspects of the job, willing to work relentlessly and to put their heart into it all.

I have found that the most successful artists are ones who find a happy medium between running their businesses and making their art. One way to do this is to create a formal program for setting goals and measuring progress. Without a focused destination in mind, your career can easily meander and keep you from realizing your potential. Working with a coach or marketing consultant can help you stay on track. Regular meetings and frequent communication with an art consultant means that you are following up with someone on how you are doing.

Here are eight key areas an art consultant can address:

**Setting annual goals.** Every business needs a strategic plan. Artists need to measure their success and chart their progress. It is easy to build on a resume and stay active as an artist by networking and making friends. But

it is vital to think big, plan the future and take concrete steps to realize those goals. An art consultant can offer objective feedback and help develop strategies aiming toward broader markets.

**Making real commitments.** Working with an art consultant means verbalizing goals, assessing priorities, and documenting those goals. The commitment becomes real when the plan is written.

**Charting and marking your progress.** Artists work hard to build a reputation. But assessment of strengths and weaknesses needs to be honest. Evaluating performance and developing new aspirations is crucial for success. It is easy to add another similar

tion, and pricing. Assessing market trends, possible audiences, and identifying a unique niche are all part of this. Objective feedback and help determining these factors can position you to sell artwork.

**Branding.** This can be as simple as personal presentation and is closely tied to the look and feel of marketing efforts. Often, a strong presentation will outdo a bad one by a better artist. The more professional the look, the more serious and successful the artist appears. Developing strong print and digital materials is a key to success.

**Keeping on track.** Working with someone outside your studio helps you set up expectations and schedules. This keeps you on track.

**Identifying outside experts.** Often, working with someone with an overview of the industry allows you to capitalize on technologies and services for small businesses. This makes it easy to outsource specific services for topnotch results at minimal cost rather than reinventing the wheel.

It's important in this often solitary quest to make room for team players — people with whom to share ideas and strategies (the ones that work and the ones that don't), as well as gain professional insight. Setting up practical business solutions can streamline your tasks and help you focus on the most important part of your business, the creativity. ▼

*Christina Saj is an art marketing consultant and gallery owner who lives and works in New Jersey. Her firm, Muse Design Group, helps artists and art-related businesses develop growth strategies to go the next step. Her formal training includes an MFA from Bard College, a BA in Fine Arts from Sarah Lawrence College, and studies of Byzantine art at Oxford University in England.*

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*Surprisingly, artists  
are inherently  
suited to business.*

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show. Soon there are pages and pages of redundant exhibits. Culling and going after better opportunities is key!

**Thinking outside the box.** Often when we're close to a problem, it's hard to find a fresh solution. Open dialogue with a coach or art consultant can provide fresh suggestions and innovative approaches. The coach should not only inspire and support, but give ideas and help create new and exciting possibilities.

**Being commercially viable.** Artists need a solid plan to stay in business. This means a self-sustaining business plan with strategies for sales, promo-

## Shipping quilts

By Susan Crouse-Kemp

**A**s organizer and curator of last year's SAQA: *On the Wall* show, I was the recipient of over 40 quilts, with wide variation in methods used for preparation and shipping. The experience of opening all these packages made me realize how important all these details are, and I would like to share some tips for professional results.

As fiber artists, we have it pretty easy when it comes to shipping our artwork. We can roll it up, we don't have to worry about glass, and the artwork is usually light and inexpensive to ship. However, we do have some responsibilities for preparation of the artwork that artists in other mediums don't have to think about. Your goal as an artist is to make sure your art is hung as perfectly as possible. While quilt venues are prepared to hang quilts, don't expect museums and galleries to have these specialized hanging systems. When you control the variables, your artwork is more likely to be hung correctly, since often you won't be there to supervise.

### Quilt Preparation

Make sure the quilt is signed and has a label on the back with your name, the name of the artwork, and your contact information. Labels can be printed onto fabric and hand-stitched to the back of the quilt. You can also use fusible web to attach the label, but fused labels have been known to come off!

Most quilt venues have a hanging system designed to accommodate sleeves and slats. Most shows historically ask for a 4-inch sleeve, which is a carryover from traditional quilt shows. A 4-inch sleeve is not always applicable for smaller artwork, and 3-inch sleeves are sufficient for most hanging systems. Larger pieces can be further enhanced by adding a bottom sleeve and slat, which helps the artwork hang flat.

Sleeves should be at least one inch

shorter than the width of the quilt to allow a half-inch on each side so the slat will not extend beyond the edges of the quilt. When attaching the sleeve, allow some extra room within the fabric tube to accommodate the thickness of the slat. If the sleeve is stitched too tightly to the back of the quilt, the slat will cause an unsightly bulge when the quilt is hung.

Slats can be made of various materials, but round curtain rods and dowels should be avoided. The thinner the slat, the less obtrusive it will appear when hanging. My favorite material for slats is aluminum bar stock, found at the hardware store. It comes in various widths and is about 1/8-inch thick. It's very strong and very thin, so there is no bulging in the sleeve. It is easily cut with an electric saw or a hacksaw, and it's easily drilled for hanging holes. It then requires some simple filing to smooth the cut ends. I find the aluminum much faster to prepare than wood, but it is a bit heavier to ship. Another option is Plexiglas, which can be cut and drilled to order.

You should always ship the slats unless explicitly asked not to by the venue.

### Shipping

Before shipping, be sure to label everything that will go into the box, including tubes, bags, slats, ties, and even the box. I often tape business cards to the inside of the box.

The most common way to ship quilts is to roll them on tubes. Good choices for tubes are swim noodles, which are light and easy to cut to size and tubes from home-decorating fabric, usually free from your local fabric store. Make sure your quilt is pressed and free of lint and hair. The quilt should be rolled with the front facing out to keep wrinkling to a minimum. (They are not likely to press your quilt at the venue.) You may put a tie

around the quilt, or maybe your bag includes the ties.

Put the rolled quilt in a labeled quilt bag. It's a good idea to then wrap the quilt in plastic to protect it from water damage. You can use a plastic bag or make your own heavy-duty bag out of 3-ml plastic painter's tarp cut to size and stitched along the side and bottom. Add a label with your name and address or attach a business card. Place the bagged quilt into a sturdy box, putting the slat on the outside of the bag. If there is extra room in the box, add filler to help prevent the box from being crushed during shipping. A suitable filler material is upholstery foam, cut to fit as needed, or you can use bubble wrap. Do not use styrofoam peanuts, because they're too messy.

To assist the venue in return shipping, you might tape return packaging instructions to the inside of the box, especially if you have special requirements. Add necessary paperwork and return shipping labels as required, and seal the box carefully.

Everyone has a favorite shipper. Most labels can now be completed online, including return shipping labels. Most shippers will charge you for insurance, so if you are shipping frequently, it might be time to buy an insurance policy for your quilts. This insurance is relatively inexpensive and may even pay for itself over the year.

You want your quilt to arrive in good condition, ready to hang, and make the return process easy for the venue. Your shipment is a representation of you and reflects on your professionalism as an artist. Make sure you're presenting a complete package. ▼

*SAQA Utah/Colorado/Wyoming representative Susan Crouse-Kemp is a fiber artist from Colorado. Her web site is [www.sckart.com](http://www.sckart.com).*

# SAQA member gallery: *Springtime*

Catherine Kleeman

*The Ides of March*

23" x 46" © 2005

Much of my work relates to the seasons, with frequent references to the sun and light. This piece reflects the change from winter to spring, from dull winter days to blooming yellow daffodils. I completed the piece on March 15, hence the title.



Terri Haugen

*Koi Dreams*

59" x 33" © 2006

I love silk and the wonderful way it takes dye. In this quilt I used different kinds of silks that I dyed and batiked. Koi are beautiful fish, colorful and elegant, similar to the silk that I dye and quilt in my material world.



Elin Waterston

*2 Dragonflies*

9" x 20" © 2005

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

I painted the dragonflies for this piece with textile paint on solid blue fabric. I then machine appliquéed them onto a piece of fabric I created by stamping layers of textures. This piece is featured in *Art Quilt Workbook*, which I co-wrote with Jane Davila (C&T, 2007).

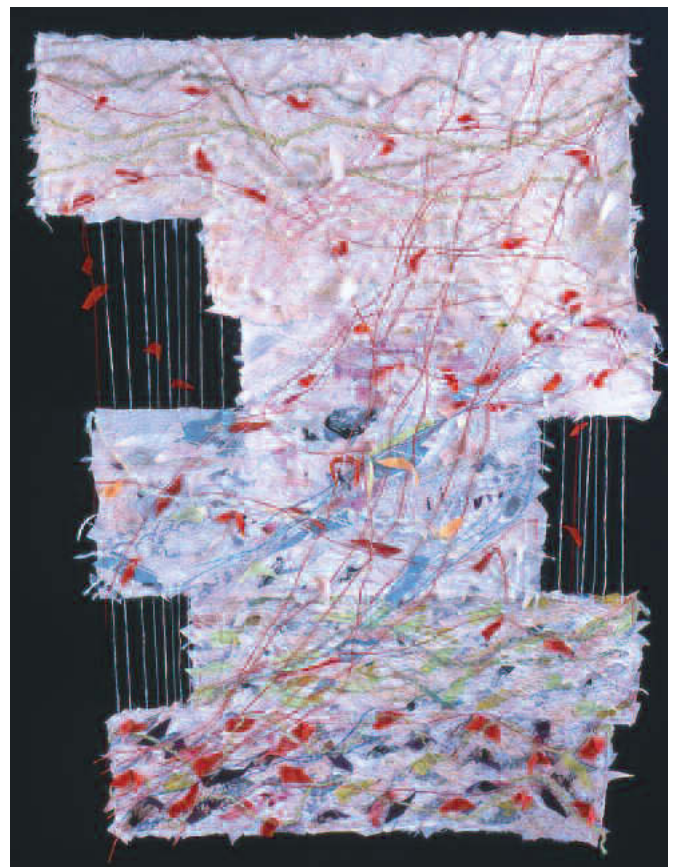


## Karen Goetzinger

### *Atonement*

60" x 48"; © 2006

In my work, I often employ a simplified kimono shape as a creative canvas and intuitively assign positions on the kimono-canvas to a variety of fragments from vintage kimonos. The field of the kimono-canvas reveals a collection of small compositions, simultaneously in contrast and in harmony with each other, creating a tension that allows an impression of tranquility and accord.



## Chiaki Dosho

### *Cherry Blossom*

45" x 59" © 2005

I made this work imagining the petal of a cherry blossom fluttering in the sky. Are you able to feel the spirits of cherry blossoms?

## Ruth Powers

### *Early Birds*

38" x 49" © 2005

Entirely pieced, commercial cottons, machine quilted. Best of Show 2006 IQA Celebrate Spring, Rosemont, IL. Owned by Thomas Contemporary Quilt Collection.



# Are vidcasts in your future?

By Bonnie Lyn McCaffery

I believe we should use every new technology available to us to promote our business. Vidcasting is one more marketing tool to incorporate into our system.

Little did I know when I purchased my iPod that I would be using it for much more than listening to music. While organizing my music in iTunes, I discovered that there are podcasts.

Podcasts are like radio shows on the Internet. They are put out daily, weekly, or monthly, and they are free. You can search for podcasts on just about any subject and you will find someone broadcasting about it, even quilting. Alex Anderson, Annie Smith, and Nadine Ruggles are a few of the podcast producers in the quilt world.

I next discovered video podcasts. These are like TV shows on the Internet and they are also free. There are a variety of terms used to describe video podcasts including vidcasts and vodcasts. I prefer to use the term vidcast as it seems to make the point that these are videos.

When I wanted to be the first in the quilt world to produce a vidcast, I had no idea what to expect. Although I am not an expert on producing vidcasts, I will give you an idea of what is involved, what I've learned, and where to go for more information.

The production of a vidcast starts

with videotaping the material to be broadcast on the Internet. A digital camcorder is essential to the process as well as a computer program to edit the video. I use Adobe® Premiere® Elements. While it is possible to learn this software by playing with it, I purchased a CD from Total Training that is excellent.

It took about a day to clean up the studio and make it presentable and to set up the camera and lights. Luckily my husband, Michael, has knowledge about lighting from his 4H days in a photography club. I wrote an outline of what I wanted to cover in the first vidcast, made myself presentable (hair and makeup, since this would be a permanent record), and sat in front of the camera. It felt a little strange to talk to a camera, but I tried to think of the end product.

The camcorder was connected to a TV monitor so I could see what was being recorded. I learned to be careful about looking at the TV while taping. An inexpensive lavalier wired microphone was connected to the camcorder. I videotaped my very first vidcast in about five hours. I began taping from a distance and then close-up.

The next step was to get the files on the computer and bring them into Adobe Premiere Elements. I finished editing the video, but then I had to figure out how to put it on the

Internet. After some research, I found a web site that described how to save and compress the file. I sent out a link for the newly uploaded video to several friends and quickly discovered that not everyone could view it.

More research led to Wordpress, a free blog application that allows for an "inline player." That means people will be able to click on the picture and it will play in Windows Media Player. If you don't already have Windows Media Player, it is a free download to both PC and MAC users. To accommodate those who don't have it, I learned to save video in an mp4 file format that will play on QuickTime.

Now that the video worked, I announced it to the quilt world. It got a fantastic response. Within five days, I had almost 2,400 unique visitors to my web site to see this video.

The next step was to get it listed on as many podcast web sites as possible and on iTunes, which led to more research about RSS. RSS is a type of file that allows viewers to be notified when the next vidcast is available. By subscribing to a vidcast on iTunes or one of the other podcatchers, viewer's computers will automatically download the next vidcast. You don't necessarily have to learn how to write an RSS feed, but you do need to find one that you can copy and paste into

See "Vidcasts" on page 28

## Resources:

1. Bonnie McCaffery's podcasts and vidcasts – [bonniemccaffery.com](http://bonniemccaffery.com)
2. Camcorder – Sony HDR-HC1
3. Audio Technica TR-35S Lavalier Microphone
4. *WordPress 2 (Visual QuickStart Guide)* book by Maria Langer, Miraz Jordan
5. Software – Adobe® Premiere® Elements
6. DVD tutorial – *Total Training Presents: Digital Video & Adobe® Premiere® Elements* – [totaltraining.com](http://totaltraining.com)
7. Wordpress – [wordpress.org](http://wordpress.org)
8. RSS Validator – [rss.scripting.com](http://rss.scripting.com)

## Investments:

| Item   | Money     | Time (hours) |
|--|-----------|--------------|
| Sony HDR-HC1 Camcorder                       | \$1,500   | 2            |
| Microphone                                   | 35        | 0            |
| Adobe Premiere Elements                      | 100       | 32           |
| Total Training CD on Adobe Premiere Elements | 70        | 2            |
| Book on Wordpress                            | 25        | 4            |
| Videotaping                                  | 0         | 5            |
| Editing and publishing                       | 0         | 8            |
| Being the first vidcast in the quilt world   | PRICELESS |              |



## Insight into critiquing

By Lisa Chipetine

**O**n August 4th, 2006, the SAQA group in New York was honored with a presentation given by Dr. Sandra Sider, an artist, critic, and curator. The purpose of the event was for members to bring their quilts for an art critique. I had to push several artists in the region to participate, reiterating that the only way to excel in their art form was to allow it to be analyzed from a curator's artistic perspective, which is very different from the judging that takes place in the quilt show environment.

Eight artists presented pieces, some of which were part of a series. Each piece was shown around the room while Sandra asked the artist specific questions about the title, artist statement, and general ideas and emotions concerning the piece. Sandra wanted to know what the artist was trying to convey and what she liked or disliked about her artwork. Sandra then gave a very specific constructive critique from a curatorial point of view. She discussed what worked visually, focusing on the elements of line, space, dimension, and scale. She made sure to communicate what was positive about the piece but at the same time didn't sugarcoat the elements that were not working.

One of the strongest lessons learned was that the most important aspect of a piece was its visual impact, and that when dealing with a representational piece, an artist must think of the "logic of the eye," or depth perception. The logic of the eye conforms exactly to how things appear in our vision, such as atmospheric perspective or one-point (linear) perspective. Another example is the receding nature of objects seen in peripheral vision, and the stereoscopic nature of objects viewed directly ahead with both eyes.

Several members had pieces that were more traditional quilts rather than art quilts, and suggestions were

made on how to incorporate design elements to evolve those pieces. In one instance a beautifully pieced bargello quilt incorporating folksy bird elements prompted a suggestion that in order to develop it into an art quilt, the artist should either enhance the shape of the bird pattern or create variety of scale for the bird element.

Leni Weiner brought a representational piece titled *The Steps* that was evaluated on its title, scale, and visual composition. The piece was successful on many levels. However, the choice of border was an area that prompted some negative criticism.

Madeleine Appell's representational landscapes were critiqued as a series in addition to their color and scale. Since most of the artists in the room did not understand the importance of working in a series nor the best way

to accomplish a cohesive series, the group spent some time discussing these points. Sandra suggested that a series should consist of at least three pieces that contain the same basic concept. Each work in the series should have the same basic dimensions, making them easier to curate and hang.

There was a discussion about framing the pieces and about executing this particular theme on a grander scale. In Natalya Aikens' case, she has created a variety of pieces about windows. Each was very small, approximately 8 x 11 inches.

The way the items are displayed is of major importance. The general consensus is that framing the artwork, especially if it is small, gives it validity in the museum world. A

See "Insight" on page 18



**Spectacular Sunsets**

29" x 21"

© 2004 Linda Abrams

discussion ensued on the importance of proper hanging devices and the necessity to educate the art community on the variety of ways to hang an art quilt (e.g., not every quilt needs a sleeve!).

Linda Abrams' *Spectacular Sunsets* and *Dancing to My Own Tune* were discussed. Sandra had rejected *Spectacular Sunsets* in her recently juried exhibition entitled *Surface Tension*. Linda specifically brought the piece to find out why it had been rejected. She learned the importance of professional slides. Sandra indicated that the piece appeared overly bold in the slide, and the slide did not accurately represent the piece. Sandra indicated that had she seen the piece in person, she probably would have juried it in.

One of the most critically acclaimed pieces of the evening was Katherina Litchman's *A Point of View*.

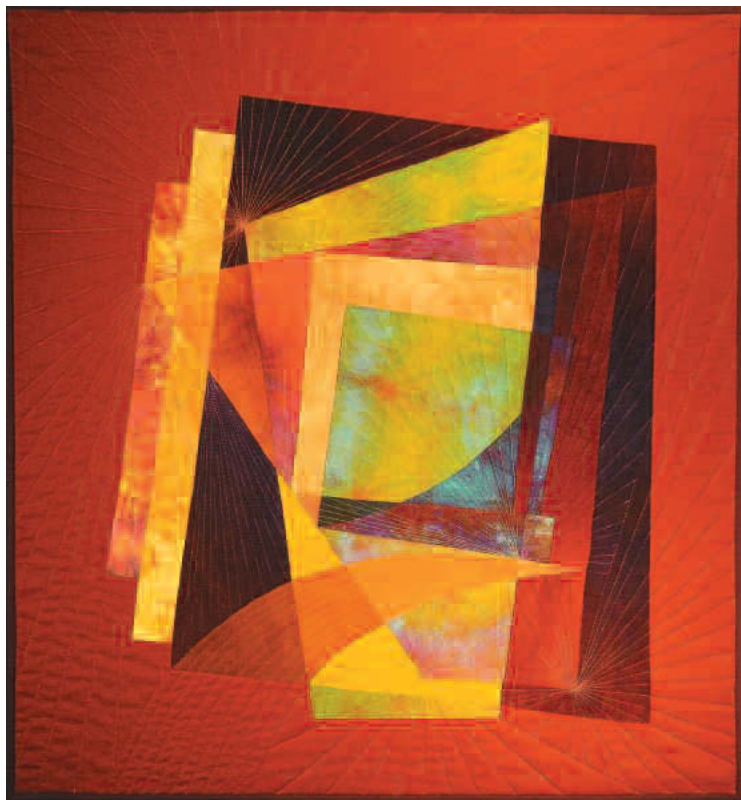
It was brilliantly executed in terms of scale, color, and design. Katherina's decision regarding the angle of the quilting lines definitely highlighted this piece. The title, originally *Abstract II*, was changed to *A Point of View* after the critique.

The audience was then encouraged to participate in a discussion that produced many different ideas on design, display options, and marketing aspects (i.e., choosing a title and writing an artist statement). Sandra indicated that an artist should carefully consider the title and what impact it might have on the viewer. Shelita Birchett's title *Black & Blue Angels* did not make sense in reference to the



***Black & Blue Angels Brood of Twelve*, 33" x 27"**  
© 2005 Shelita Birchett

***A Point of View*, 30" x 27"**, © 2006 Katherina Litchman



piece until she read her artist's statement, which was a very personal account of health issues. Suggestions were made on how to improve the artist's statement and title of the quilt.

This was one of the most educational events ever given in our region. It showed me the importance of the critique in developing mentorship programs and for the evolution of individual artists. I am fortunate that Sandra and other SAQA professional artist members here in New York are willing to give their time and share their knowledge with our active members.

The topics of critiquing and critique groups are an integral part of the agenda for the 2007 SAQA Conference "Bridging the Gap: Quilt World to Art World." Sandra will give a lecture and individual critiques at the conference. ▼

SAQA board member and New York regional co-representative Lisa Chipetine creates artwork and gives lectures and workshops on the art quilt. Her web site is [www.threadplay.com](http://www.threadplay.com).

# Proposed critique process

**Purpose:** To help each other work through problems associated with being creative and moving ahead with our work.

## Basic assumptions:

- We are looking for constructive comments and advice on our work
- We are looking for information on how to get our work into juried shows, publications and sales venues
- Only we as artists are in the driver's seat when it comes to decisions about our work
- These assumptions affect the role of those seeking advice as well as those providing advice

## Those of us seeking advice and information:

- Need to concisely articulate information about our work to help the group to provide a useful response
- Need to be specific about the type of feedback we are looking for
- Need to give permission to the group to offer their feedback

(See **Guidelines for those seeking feedback**)

## Those of us providing advice and information:

- Need to carefully observe the work presented
- Need to listen to the artist to ensure we understand the intent and the nature of the question posed to the group
- Need to inquire further (as necessary) before offering any advice

(See **Guidelines for those providing feedback**)

## Guidelines for those seeking feedback

Your work should be displayed to ensure that everyone in the group sees it clearly.

- It should be hung vertically or held up for the group by someone other than yourself

- If the work is small or has elements that need to be seen up close, ensure that it is circulated or made available to the group in advance of the feedback session.

1. Begin by situating this piece for the group (two minutes maximum)
  - Is this new work?
  - Does it stand alone, or is it part of a series?
  - Does it represent a departure from previous work? In what way?
  - Discuss theme/motif, composition/design/colour, techniques, scale
2. What aspects of this piece are you pleased with?
3. What aspects of this piece are you less pleased with?
4. What questions do you have for the group?  
(Technical advice, design/composition/colour, ideas for next piece, entering it in a show?)

## Guidelines for those providing feedback

Before offering any advice, please ensure:

- You have had an opportunity to see the piece, in particular those aspects singled out by the artist.
- You are satisfied that those seeking feedback have first addressed all four questions in the guidelines

When offering feedback:

- Your response should address the artist's specific question, but also try to relate your comments to what the artist said when talking about what pleased or displeased them about the piece – try to preface your statement with what you heard if possible.
- Try to format your feedback as a question for the artist's consideration; for example:

"I heard you say ... about your piece, would you consider trying this ...?"

"What if you tried '...xyz...' in your next piece?"

## Group Process:

1. Someone in the group offers to walk through the guide (interview format) with the artist. This helps keep the subject on track and relieves the presenter of having to worry about covering all the points – someone else looks after this for them.
2. Prior to offering answers to the artist's question, the interviewer asks the group if they have any points of clarification or additional questions for the artist. This is to ensure that everybody has understood the artist clearly. Questions such as:  
"Could you tell us some more about what you meant when you said...?"  
"Could you elaborate more on this point...?"
3. Someone else in the group watches the time. This is particularly important when there are several people seeking feedback in one short evening.  
Specifically, the time watcher:
  - a. Calls the beginning and the end of each session.
  - b. Reminds the 'interviewer' of the elapsed time at predetermined intervals as necessary.
4. Maximum session length – 20 minutes
  - a. Artist presentation – 5 minutes
  - b. Questions of clarification – 3 minutes
  - c. Feedback session – 12 minutes
5. Someone from the group takes notes on the salient points of the exchange. These hand-written notes are then given to the artist to take away at the end of the meeting.

Reprint permission granted by Kit Vincent. The process was developed by her critique group in Ontario, Canada, as a means to solidify the goals and methods for their critique sessions.

# It's a digital world

by Rose Hughes

Many of you took the plunge and submitted your artwork for our juried exhibition *SAQA: Transformations '07*. For many, it was your first foray into sending out photos of your quilts digitally. The art world, along with everyone else, is faced with the need to switch from slides to digital images, and the trend will certainly gain momentum because slide projectors are no longer being made.

Using digital images to enter exhibitions and submit portfolios is becoming the standard. This article will help you understand some of the basics of how to store and send your images out into the world to have them represent your artwork effectively. If you would like more in-depth information on the topics of digital photo storage and editing, there are many resources available on the Web and at your local library.

## The basics

You need to start with a good image. The ease of taking a digital photo does not change the fact that a quilt must be correctly hung on an appropriate background and lit properly before being photographed. A bad digital photograph cannot be manipulated into a good one.

The setup for photographing your artwork hasn't changed, but the camera and the output are different now. In the past, your camera used film that gave you either negatives or slides for output. The film recorded images within a structure made up of small grains. The smaller the grain, the greater the image could be enlarged without distortion. The film speed controlled the quality of the original image through a light-to-grain ratio, and once the film was exposed, it was removed from the camera and processed with chemicals.

Digital images are made up of a grid of pixels within a file that is

stored in the camera's memory. As with film, the greater the number of pixels, the larger the image can be printed without distortion. The digital camera itself controls the quality of the original image by its ability to record light as a specified number of pixels. Once recorded, image files are transferred to a computer. Thus, for our purposes, a negative or slide is equal to a digital file.

Digital files are created when you set up and photograph your quilt or have your quilt photographed by a professional. The picture files will be either in your camera or supplied to you by your photographer on a CD. Here are the steps you need to take to process your images:

- Copy the files from the camera or CD to your computer.
- Examine files, delete any unwanted or duplicate files, and rename according to your filing system.
- Make a backup copy of the files to permanent storage media.
- Use photo editing software to make suitable files for your needs, rename, and save.

## Storage

Your computer is like a large filing cabinet, and you should establish the categories and subcategories for a filing system that makes sense to you.

Create a folder specifically for downloading images. (If the name of this folder starts with 00; i.e., *00incomingphotos*, it will always appear at the top of your list of files.) Then you can easily find your newest photo files and access them to edit and rename as needed.

Determine a hierarchy for your filing system and stick to it. Remember to keep it simple, possibly storing by name, theme, or date only. (For my system, I use *MY PHOTOS*, with a subfolder named *QUILTS*, and folders

within this for *2001 Works*, *2002 Works*, *2003 Works*, etc. The files for each quilt are stored by name within the appropriate year).

## Editing

Always make a backup copy of your images, leaving the originals intact, before you edit, alter, or crop them.

For a professional appearance, you will always want to ensure that your original image shows your artwork to its best advantage, and for that, you may want to edit the image. Editing can take place in the camera or through software like Adobe® Photoshop® or Corel® Paint Shop Pro® Photo.

## Creating the sizes you need

A digital image may take on many roles. You may use it to submit an entry for exhibition, share it with family and friends through email or newsletters, put it on a Web site, print it to share, include it in your portfolio, or convert it to a slide. Depending on its purpose, the digital file may be large or small, and once you begin taking digital photos you will want to know how to create different sizes for your needs.

For example, you have an image of your art quilt and you know that minimally you need to:

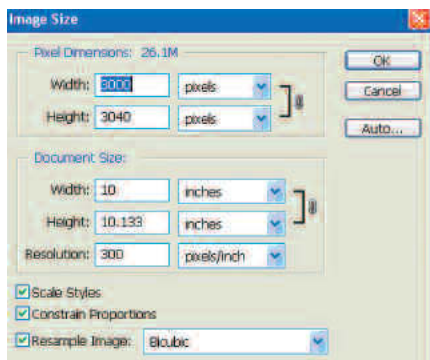
- Include it in your portfolio (requiring excellent quality color prints up to 8" x 10")
- Send the image for an exhibition entry (requiring an image size of 1800 pixels wide x 1200 pixels in height or 6" x 4" at 300 dpi)
- Place it on your Web site (requiring a good quality image with a file small enough to be loaded very quickly)

Once your photo is cropped and edited, you will need to change the image size for the three uses noted

above. While a digital image may be made smaller without a noticeable loss of quality, be cautious about enlarging an image. When you increase the size of an image, you cannot add information (pixels) that doesn't already exist in the image, so the software must interpolate the extra information, thus resulting in a loss of quality.

There are many software applications that you can use to help you change an image size. One may have come with your camera, or Windows, Adobe® Photoshop®, and Corel® Paint Shop Pro® Photo are just a few of many readily available. The screens shown here are from Photoshop.

To review and change the size of the image file in Photoshop, select File > Open, and browse to locate and open the file containing your photo. Select Image > Image Size. From here you can change the size of the photo, then save it in the various formats you want.



The Image Size window displays the following information:

**Pixel Dimensions:** This image is 26.1 megabytes. (This is a very large file and much too big for use on the Web or to send via email.) Width and height in pixels are shown here.

**Document Size:** Width and height are shown in inches. Resolution is displayed in pixels per inch.

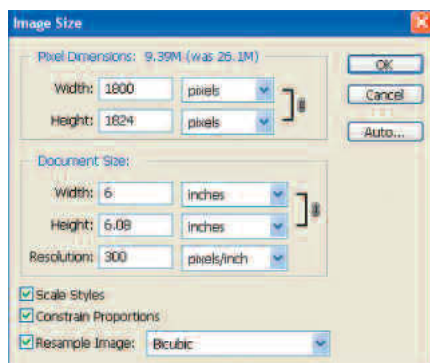
Additionally, there is a Constrain Proportions box. Leave this turned on so that if a change is made to one

dimension, the other dimension will also be changed to maintain the image's existing proportions.

The image size in this example will produce a good print for a portfolio. The resolution is adequate for a high-quality print on 8.5 x 11 paper.

You can also change the size of the file to meet the requirements for an exhibition entry. Verify the size requirements specified in the prospectus. These might be specified in number of pixels or in inches at a particular resolution.

For this example, we are assuming requirements of approximately 6 inches at 300 pixels per inch.



Enter 6 for the width. The height automatically changes and the proportions remain constant. Click OK. Select File > Save as, then type in a new name so that the original high-resolution file is also maintained.

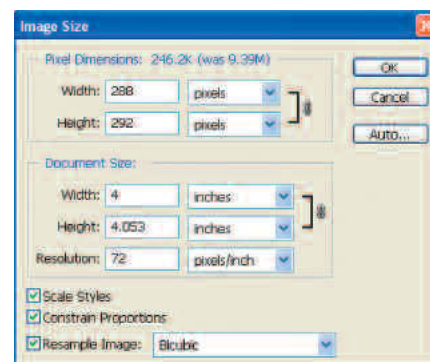
I suggest giving the new file a name that reflects the size, such as *ravencreates-6-300.jpg*. In my personal filing system, this tells me that it is 6 inches wide and has resolution set to 300.

If the requirements ask for a JPEG, choose this option from the Format pop-up menu when you save the file. When you click Save, you will see the JPEG options box. The higher the quality, the better the image will print, but the larger the file size will be.

You can also create a small file size appropriate for placing on a Web site. Small files are necessary for the Web so that your viewer doesn't give up

waiting for the image to load. How many of us have just said "forget it" and clicked away in search of something more readily accessible?

For this version, open the original image again. (Don't use the JPEG from the medium-size version — every time you resave a JPEG, you are recompressing it and thus lowering the image quality.) Go to Image > Image Size.



Four inches is a good size for a Web image, so enter 4 for the width. The height changes and the proportions remain constant. Enter 72 for the resolution.

Save the file with a new name; for example *ravencreates-w.jpg*. In my personal filing system, this tells me that it is for the Web. In the JPEG options box (in Photoshop), choose Quality 5 or less for quicker transmission.

You have now saved your one image file three ways and are ready to use this photo for almost any need. Just keep in mind that digital photo images have a wide range of uses and that when an opportunity comes your way, you must read the requirements and prepare your images accordingly. ▼

*SAQA professional artist member Rose Hughes is a fiber artist, teacher, author, and exhibit coordinator for SAQA. Her web site is [www.rosehughes.com](http://www.rosehughes.com).*

## One juror's process

By Susan Crouse-Kemp

Last fall, Dr. Alice Zrebiec, the juror for the SAQA: *On the Wall* show, gave a lecture to Front Range Contemporary Quilters (FRCQ) about her approach to jurying a show.

Dr. Zrebiec is an art historian who received her PhD from the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. Her extensive resume includes her work as the former curator of textiles in the Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She is currently the consulting curator of the Textile Art Department for the Denver Art Museum and an independent curator and consultant living in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

She began her talk with a preliminary discussion of her process, and then followed by showing all the accepted slides from the *On the Wall* exhibition and FRCQ's *Material Matters*, a show she juried for the Kimball Center in Park City, Utah. She used the slides to point out some of her selection reasoning, but she did not delve into the specifics of any

particular artwork.

Dr. Zrebiec begins her jury process by reviewing all the entries a couple of times without making any decisions. She then starts again and begins to select works, first by choosing pieces that, in her judgment, are obvious winners. For her, this means there is no obvious way to improve upon the artwork.

She then begins to grade the artwork on a scale of one to five. As she approaches artwork that falls in the middle of the grade, she starts determining her selection on a number of criteria, including how the piece fits with the rest of the show in content, color, and size; whether another chosen piece needs a companion piece; whether the venue complements the artwork; and the quantity of artwork that will fit in the venue. Some of these subsequent criteria might knock out some of those from the original selection. For example, a piece might not fit with the look and feel of the rest of the exhibition. After she loads her selections into a single tray, she

leaves it overnight and comes back a day later to go through them all again and make any final tweaks.

The quilts usually fall into one of the following categories: pictorial imagery, interpretive, painterly, and other. For her talk to FRCQ, she used these categories to group the slides of her selections. As she showed each slide, she mentioned all the artists and titles of the pieces, with a few comments on why she included some pieces or what stood out about a particular piece.

She made a few other points in her talk. She generally prefers to work as a solo juror. She feels the different personalities and perspectives of multiple jurors make for too much haggling in the decision-making process. This usually means that pieces a single juror would have chosen can be negotiated out of the show for works preferred by another juror.

Dr. Zrebiec recommended that artists not include a third piece just to enter three pieces, but to make sure all are up to your standards in presentation and slide quality. In closing, she mentioned that the SAQA exhibition was one of the best and most interesting shows she has juried, making the selection process very difficult.

SAQA Utah/Colorado/Wyoming representative Susan Crouse-Kemp is a fiber artist from Colorado. Her web site is [www.sckart.com](http://www.sckart.com).



Susan Crouse-Kemp and Gerry Riggs, then director of the Gallery of Contemporary Art at the University of Colorado Springs, with Dr. Alice Zrebiec in front of B.J. Adams' *Variations on "S"* at the SAQA: *On the Wall* opening reception.

## Artist residency at sea

By Rosemary Claus-Gray

**F**iber artist Carolyn Lee Vehslage received an invitation for an artist-in-residence program on a six-star Crystal Cruises ship touring the world in 101 days in 2005. She then circled the globe again on their flagship, the Crystal Serenity, in 2006 for 106 days. I had two questions for her: “How did you do that?” and “Do you need any help?” I was one of the fortunate artists who assisted her for two weeks of the 2006 world cruise during the Central and South American segment. During our time together, we discussed how the artist residency came to be, while we enjoyed perfect weather, fabulous food, good company, and exotic ports.

**RCG:** How did you come across this opportunity in the first place?

**CLV:** They found me through my web site. In the fall of 2004, my husband and I were cruising on our sailboat Fandango on the Chesapeake Bay. I went to an Internet café and received an email asking, “Would you consider

around the world. I grew up in a family that sailed, and I dreamt of sailing the seven seas. This would become a dream come true.

Since I was very skeptical that it was scam, I didn’t tell my husband for a whole month while I checked it out. I kept thinking there would be a big financial catch. It didn’t seem possible to be ‘given’ a free world cruise for two, valued at over \$100,000. When I learned that the Crystal Cruises is a six-star cruise line, winning awards from Conde Nast for being top in its class for ten years straight, it dawned on me that this was a genuine opportunity.

They were particularly interested in my “Gardens of the World” quilted wall hanging and the international projects I had participated in. They

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*This would be a dream come true.*

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going on a world cruise as an artist, leading a quilt project?”

I didn’t believe it was real. Since I was a child, I had wanted to cruise

See “Residency at sea” on page 24



Crystal Serenity 2005 World Cruise Quilt, 60" x 132", © 2005 Carolyn Lee Vehslage

## Residency at sea from page 23

realized that I could teach a variety of quilting and painting skills.

**RCG:** Did the cruise staff provide guidelines for what they expected from you, or what would constitute an appropriate art project?

**CLV:** For the 2005 101-day voyage, Crystal Cruises told me they had had a quilt project on each of their prior world cruises, and they wanted to enhance the guests' experience. Once a year they organize a special four-month long cruise that leaves Los Angeles in January and arrives in England in May. Along the way, they host special events above and beyond their outstanding activities. They bring on additional entertainment, guest lecturers, and the "World Cruise Quilt" project.

Crystal Cruises emphasizes pleasing the guests as a priority in all things.

They wanted a project that would appeal to sophisticated adults. The classes would be one hour long scheduled on days at sea. The guests speak various languages, have different skill levels, interests, and abilities, yet each of them will expect to create something that is satisfying to himself or herself.

For my first residency, I designed a quilt that told the story of our voyage. Crystal Cruises' logo is two sea-horses, and their color scheme is teal. With the budget Crystal Cruises provided, I ordered several hundred dollars worth of light, medium, and dark teal fabrics. As the guests completed their 6"x6" quilt blocks, I arranged them with the lightest ones at the top graduating down to the darkest at the bottom. The over-all effect became a mural of the sky meeting the deep sea with the horizon in the middle.

When viewed from a distance, the quilt appears to undulate with waves.

For 2006, I considered the needs of the guests cruising for either a two-week segment or for the entire world cruise. This time, I chose to have the guests create individual fiber art post-cards that they could take home at the end of their voyage. Every two weeks we displayed the finished post-cards on seven nine-foot tall banners, each in a color of the rainbow. These banners represented the seven segments that make up the 2006 world cruise itinerary, the seven continents, and the seven seas.

**RCG:** How does an artist contact cruise ship lines?

**CLV:** There are several agencies. I am most familiar with Compass Speakers and Entertainment, Inc., out of Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Niklas Sardana is the president and can be reached at (954) 779-3992. A Google search may turn up more possibilities.

While each person's individual contract may vary, it's my understanding that the cruise industry standard for the artists and lecturers is to pay the agency \$50-75 per day that the artist is onboard the ship. While a good deal for a one-week cruise, it adds up pretty quickly for a 100+ day voyage.

For an artist, class time is often about an hour per day while at sea. The rest of the time, the artist is a guest aboard the cruise ship and is treated like all the other guests. Any of the extras that the guests have to pay for the artist pays for too. The cruise itself is without charge.

**RCG:** Were you required to follow standards of conduct?

**CLV:** Oh, yes. All staff must follow the ship's standards of conduct and adhere to the dress code. Any violations may mean that the artist will be spoken to by the officer in charge or put off at the next port of call. While a lot is at stake in terms of how the artist presents herself or himself, it is not difficult to follow these guidelines.

### *Gardens of the World*

71" x 48"

© 2001 Carolyn Lee Vehslage





**RCG:** What are the terms you negotiated?

**CLV:** For the first cruise in 2005, my husband quit his job to come with me on what we thought would be a once-in-a-lifetime trip for the entire world cruise. For the 2006 cruise, he was able to visit for three weeks during the African segment. The rest of the time, family members and artist friends joined me for a segment each. Like me, they did not have to pay for the cruise, were treated as guests aboard the ship, and had to pay the same expenses that I did: port fees, tips, alcohol, and any side excursions in ports.

My guests had to provide their own transportation to the boarding port and from the disembarking port. This involved some world travel at significant expense. Passports must be current. Some segments of the trip required having shots for illness such as Yellow Fever.

I negotiated a budget to purchase the supplies and ship them to the embarkation port. I requested an appropriate place for the class with a space that had tables, good seating, and good light. For behind-the-scenes work on the postcard project, my assistant and I used our stateroom. This made for cramped working conditions at times, but we managed.

**RCG:** What do you see as the advantages for the artist to be onboard a ship sailing around the world for several months?

**CLV:** I've already mentioned that it is a personal fulfillment of a lifelong dream for me. Professionally, I am able to associate with people who are interested in art and who have the discretionary income to purchase luxury items. While my contract wouldn't allow me to sell my art directly onboard the ship, people learn how to contact me privately if they are interested in my artwork. I have gained patrons as a result of the artist residency. The networking has proven to be invaluable. In addition,

I've finally been able to visit some of the exotic destinations on my "Gardens of the World" quilt.

**RCG:** Do the guests have input about the quality of the class and the teacher?

**CLV:** Absolutely! The guests rate each member of the entertainment staff every two weeks. Complaints are taken seriously. Mediocre ratings mean you are not invited back. Only those artists who score an "A" rating consistently, and whose problems are ones successfully resolved, are invited back for another artist residency.

**RCG:** What are the other requirements and advice that you might offer an artist considering applying for a residency?

**CLV:** When you are part of the entertainment staff, any time you are out of the stateroom, it's as though you are on stage. Try to be upbeat, positive, and friendly to everyone. Saying hello, smiling, pausing to chat, offering to help with a door or other need, as well as being generous with paying attention to others is part of your job. I believe my ability to socialize with everyone was a reason I was asked back for my second around-the-world cruise.

Keeping a positive tone in the class, a can-do attitude, and a light-hearted conversation going are all pluses. A goal for each class was to help each person complete a small art project. Each guest felt good about completing the fiber art postcard and was proud to display it on the banners.

**RCG:** What other tips might you offer artists in residence while mixing with the cruise ship guests?

**CLV:** Controversial topics should be avoided, such as politics, religion, or perceived problems aboard the ship. You can listen, but don't comment. Try to steer the conversation in a different direction. If there is a problem, offer to help resolve it by contacting the appropriate staff person.

Do not discuss any problems you may be experiencing out of the stateroom. A guest may overhear you, and the problem could become a rumor, which then becomes an issue for the staff to resolve. That will reflect negatively on you. Be aware that the guests aboard the ship become a small community over the course of the world cruise.

The Crystal Serenity has a formal dress code. The entertainment staff is required to dress appropriately and not wear clothing like jeans or flip-flops. Not only do the guests notice what everyone is wearing, but the staff also checks to ensure that the artists are abiding by the dress code.

**RCG:** Is there anything more you would like to share with artists considering applying for a residency at sea?

**CLV:** Seeing glimpses of so much of the world is invaluable. I have many photographs that will serve my artwork for years to come. While I was not able to work on my own art while on board, I have primed the pump for when I return to my studio. The stimulation of ports, people, art, and time away from the daily routines all refresh my mind.

The artist in residency at sea opportunity is available to artists willing to apply, plan a project, and be available when needed aboard a ship. Bon voyage!

For more trip photos and more information on Carolyn Lee Vehslage's adventures, check out her web site [www.fandango.us](http://www.fandango.us). Her artwork and additional photos of both world cruise projects are viewable at [www.clvquilts.com](http://www.clvquilts.com). ▼

*SAQA professional artist member Rosemary Claus-Gray has recently retired from her professional career as a counselor and is now a full-time studio artist and writer. Her artwork is online at [www.rosemaryclaus-gray.com](http://www.rosemaryclaus-gray.com)*

# Meet your regional representatives

Since the Fall of 2004, the Journal has been introducing each regional representative. We started with the West Coast reps and worked our way toward the East Coast and then around the world. During that time, some new reps have volunteered their time and effort. We will continue to work our way from West to East.

## Noriko Endo

Japan SAQA representative



Japan is a small country with four seasons. The changing colors of the leaves always inspires me. The mystery and wonder of nature fascinate me. A mature tree is one of the boldest graphic impressions that any human witnesses in his daily life, and my artwork fully expresses this recurring theme. Sharing my love of

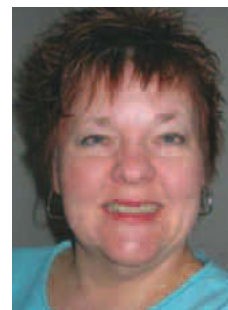
landscape quilting is a great joy for me.

Only ten members comprise the Japan region. We find English a hard barrier for the quilters in Japan. As a SAQA representative for the past year, I encourage artists new to the medium to join. I hope I can develop a SAQA presence throughout Japan by distributing membership brochures and sample *Journals* from the past year. I hope to promote awareness of quilts as fine art.

Having been involved in quilt making since 1985, I am teaching, selling, and exhibiting my artwork, and I enjoy my freedom of working full time in my studio in my home.

## Kimberlee Madsen

North Dakota/South Dakota/Nebraska SAQA representative



Have you ever wondered if it is possible to be genetically engineered or environmentally conditioned to love all things textile? I think I am a product of both. I was born into a family of textile people — everyone had an interest in clothing, buttons, quilts,

*Chased by the Light*, 44" x 56", © 2005 Noriko Endo





Above: **23 Cents**, 21" x 28",  
© 2005 Kimberlee Madsen

Right: **Shining Koi, Hidden Bass**,  
32.5" x 36.5" © Linda McCurry



embroidery, and upholstery. As a child, I always had paper dolls, art supplies, the button box, endless notions, and fabrics to experiment with and time and encouragement to explore. Naturally, my favorite gift as a child was a Singer chain stitch sewing machine. My Barbie dolls were very well dressed in original creations.

I am not sure if I would define myself as an art quilter. Perhaps I am a quilter who appreciates art quilts and occasionally creates a quilt that I consider art. Most of the quilts I create are not intended to function as bed covers or to provide warmth on cold winter nights. They are intended to be displayed.

Currently I am working on my master's degree in textile history with a quilt studies emphasis. My thesis project will be an exhibition of art quilts, co-curated with Kim Baird,

from makers in Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota. The exhibition opens Oct. 25, 2007, at the Plains Art Museum in Fargo, North Dakota, and continues through January 13, 2008. The show promises to be full of color and will showcase the creativity of that region's art quilters.

## Linda McCurry

Arizona SAQA representative



Although I have been sewing since I was old enough to reach the foot pedal on the sewing machine, my love affair with art quilts began in the late nineties. Coming from a fashion

design background (University of Arizona and Pima College, Tucson), I hold fine workmanship in great esteem. Most of my work explores the use of hand-dyes and other surface treatments, but my best known work contains no fabric at all: *High Fiber Quilt, Quilt National '05*. My personal goals are to become a national teacher and have gallery representation.

### Twelve Voices

The exhibits committee is very excited about our most recent exhibition project, *Twelve Voices*. This show will be open to national and international SAQA members and premieres at the Dennon Museum Center in Traverse City, Michigan. It will have a full-color catalogue and an exciting travel schedule as well. This unique exhibition will focus on the work of twelve artists, each of whom will have between four and six pieces in the show. We are particularly excited that SAQA board member and art-quilt expert Penny McMorris has graciously agreed to jury this exhibition. In her words, she will “be looking for artwork which represents twelve clearly defined, unique voices, not quoting from others. The quilts, whether relatively recent or showing growth of ideas over a long time period, should display some stylistic continuity. While this does not mean necessarily repeating the same themes, colors or techniques, it does mean that the artwork should appear to come from the spirit and intellect of one artist.” Penny will have more than a month to thoroughly consider portfolio submissions, and I have no doubt *Twelve Voices* will be a hallmark among SAQA’s growing collection of exhibitions. ▼

your own file, and then modify it with your vidcast information. The RSS feed should also be tested to be sure it is correctly written. I use <http://rss.scripting.com/>. The RSS http address is entered into the blank field. Then the RSS validator web site reviews the files and tells you if there are any errors in the RSS file.

If you decide to do vidcasts, you will need to find out how much bandwidth you have. Every time someone downloads your vidcast, it counts against the monthly allotted bandwidth usage from your server. At some point, the monthly allotment will be more than is available, and the web site will either be charged for the excess bandwidth or shut down. I check daily to see how much bandwidth has been used. As the vidcasts are viewed more frequently, I will need to pay more to get more bandwidth.

Has this been a valuable marketing tool? You bet. It is expensive as far as equipment and time spent videotaping and learning about how to do the vidcasts, but it is my new passion. My vidcasts are free, but I try to bring people through my web site to see the videos. They are exposed to my quilts and the merchandise for sale. It has been a valuable learning tool, because one day I will be making DVDs to sell. I may even go into business producing other people’s web videos. ▼

*Bonnie Lyn McCaffery, author of Fantasy Fabrics, Fantasy Floral Quilts, and Portrait Quilts: Painted Faces You Can Do, travels and teaches her creative techniques far and wide. Her quilts and vidcasts are available on her web site, [bonniemccaffery.com](http://bonniemccaffery.com).*

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# Quilts=Art=Quilts

By Jeanne Raffer Beck

The 2006 *Quilts=Art=Quilts* exhibition opened in November at the Schweinfurth Memorial Art Center in Auburn, New York, and ran through the first week of January. Ninety-seven quilts from 28 states, Canada, and France were selected for the exhibition from approximately 250 entries. Jurors were Ann Clarke (Syracuse University Fiber Department chair), M. Joan Lintault, and Robert Shaw.

During the three-day opening weekend, the Art Center sponsored several classes, a banquet dinner and lecture, a guided tour of the exhibition, and a trunk show. Four thousand dollars in prizes were awarded to participating artists. Approximately 5,000 visitors attended the 2006 exhibition and three quilts sold.

The juried exhibition and Schweinfurth Memorial Art Center both celebrated their 25th anniversaries in 2006. The Art Center, built through a bequest of Julius Schweinfurth to the city of Auburn, opened to the public in 1981. That same year, the Art Center premiered an invitational exhibition of 25 quilts titled *Quilts=Art=Quilts*. From its inception,

the driving force behind the annual exhibition has been artist and quilt appraiser Eugenia Barnes, who has served as the venue's executive consultant.

The Art Center took the position from the beginning that quilts are an art form and deserve to be viewed as such. Over the years the works of many renowned art quilters have been exhibited at Schweinfurth. In addition, many emerging art quilters have had their first opportunity to see their artwork displayed in a space designed to showcase fine art.

Historically, *Quilts=Art=Quilts* has had a fairly equal representation of traditional and improvisational quilts. Because the jurying process was done by viewing the actual quilts, many regional quilters entered, while non-regional entries declined in favor of venues that juried from slides.

The Art Center shifted to jurying from slides or digital images two years ago. Art Center Director Donna Lamb said that this change in entry guidelines significantly increased the number and improved the caliber of submissions, which nearly doubled

between 2004 and 2005. The proportion of contemporary to traditional quilts also increased substantially.

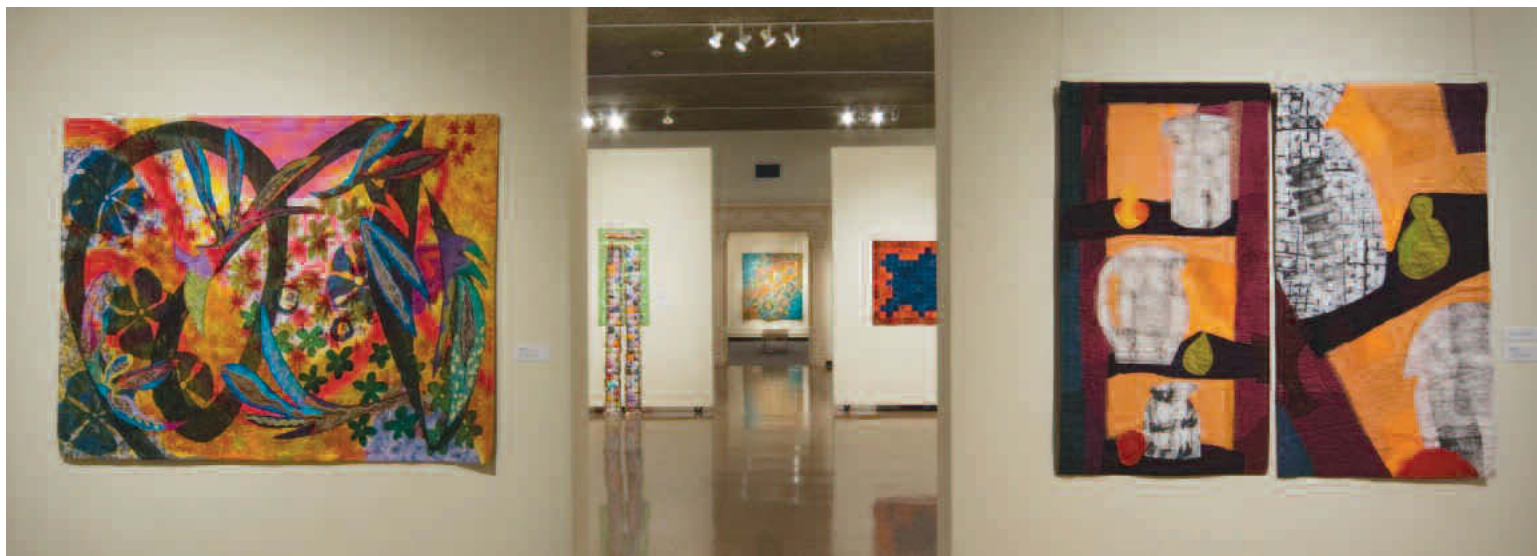
What does Schweinfurth have to offer as a venue? The facility's spacious, well-lit gallery spaces are one of its greatest strengths. At the front entry, wide glass doors offer visitors an immediate glimpse of the main gallery, which has freestanding portable walls so work can be hung both throughout the interior and around the perimeter of the room.

On each side of the main hall are smaller side galleries, three on one side and two on the other, for a total of six connected spaces. The artwork is hung well, and even in the smaller side galleries it doesn't seem crowded.

Schweinfurth's *Quilts=Art=Quilts* is establishing itself as a venue that is highly competitive, selective, and prestigious. If you are interested in placing *Quilts=Art=Quilts* on your submissions calendar for 2007, go to [www.schweinfurthartcenter.org](http://www.schweinfurthartcenter.org) to download a prospectus. ▼

*SAQA professional artist member Jeanne Raffer Beck is an artist, teacher, and writer who lives in New York state's Finger Lakes region. Her web site is [www.jeannebeck.com](http://www.jeannebeck.com).*

*From left to right: Lisa Williamson, Delicacies of the Moon; Pat Owoc, Interstate: Scenic View; Ellin Larimer, Late Summer; Leslie Bowman-Friedlander, Room for Squares 1; Dominic Nash, Stills From a Life 17*



# Composition

from page 6

If you compose on the computer, save each version as you go. Once my central elements have been more clearly defined, I move on to think about my format.

The square is a compositional format that has been used throughout the ages. This symmetrical format was used extensively during the Renaissance and continues to this day. It produces a strong center of interest; if you have an element that you want to stand out, to be given primary emphasis, consider using a square format.

Most 2-D artworks follow a rectangular format. This is an easy-on-the-eye arrangement that people all over the world respond to. However, consider modifying this often-used shape. What if you greatly elongated the rectangle? What if you put together a series of rectangles, either horizontally or vertically? Finally, if your idea or main elements are unusual, you might want to consider

an even more radical format. What about an oval quilt? A circular piece? An amorphous shape? Whatever you choose, think about how your idea, your sketched-out elements, will be incorporated into your format.

After I have my central idea and my format, I start to think about how I will divide my space within the chosen format. This is where most artists get bogged down. From scientific arrangements such as the Golden Mean, to dynamic symmetry, to modern graphic designs, there are a million different ways to consider this important aspect of art creation. When teaching, I often rely on a simple 9-patch of compositional arrangements in order to divide space. This is a good place to begin, offering ease and great results.

However, I also teach artists to divide their space freely, without too much thought. The easiest way to do this is to draw your format, say, a rectangle, several times on paper. Then divide

each rectangle with 5-7 straight lines. Finally, simply choose the one you like the best. This sounds "too easy" to many people, but it often yields fantastic results.

I also recommend looking at *The Graphic Design Cookbook* by Koren and Meckler. This book is an excellent resource of copyright-free space divisions and although it is primarily used in graphic design, I find it produces beautiful results for fine artists as well. No matter how you choose to achieve your compositional structure, I find that in many cases, the simpler, more straightforward designs work extremely well as opposed to a copied or contrived arrangement. Trust yourself and allow your innate sense of composition to shine through. ▼

*Next Journal: Creating space, rhythm, harmony, and texture within a piece.*

SAQA active member Brett Barker is an artist, teacher, and author. Her web site is [www.brettbarkerart.com](http://www.brettbarkerart.com).



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## Taking classes

from page 7

what could have been wrong and what we need to do to improve our artwork. I wondered if the compositions were weak? Were they too unlike a quilt? Were they the last in a long day of judging? Or are they just plain bad? I'm still not sure, but whatever the reason for the rejection, I love making them. They are too much fun! And anything that enjoyable can't be all bad. I love mixing my painting background with my quilting. I enjoy stitching around the paint strokes and finding line and pattern in the merging of colors. I entered the first three I had completed in this new technique — possibly I jumped the gun and need to work through the series a bit more, improving and exploring, then try again later to enter these painted canvas quilts in a major show.

From this advanced painting class I have found another direction in which to work: one that follows along with my fabric pieces, but gives me a bit of a break from appliqué and piecing. This class has also helped me with my critique skills. We spend three hours of discussion of everyone's artwork. It is fascinating! I am learning so much that is helping me with my own artwork and helping me talk about my students' artwork in ways to help guide them towards their own goals.

Having to paint once a week in order to have something for the wall and discussion keeps me energized and thinking about my next painting. Painting gives me different avenues to explore my creativity and influences the direction of my fabric art quilts. It is a win-win situation.

I encourage everyone to find an artist/instructor to study with. See where this will take you and how it will influence your art quilts. E-mail me with your story. ▼

*SAQA president Katie Pasquini Masopust is an artist, author, teacher, and lecturer. Her web site is [www.katiepm.com](http://www.katiepm.com)*

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