

SAQQA *Journal*

Studio Art Quilt Associates, Inc.



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Fall 2007



ICE

by Sandra Woock

see pages 2 and 24

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Thoughts from the SAQA president

by Judith Content



As SAQA's new president, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the board of directors and outgoing president Katie Pasquini Masopust for placing their confidence in me. Becoming SAQA's third president is an honor and responsibility that I do not take lightly. I am optimistic that my three years as board member and one year as vice-president will provide ample preparation for this new and exciting role. I am committed to taking SAQA into the future and establishing it as an arts organization synonymous with excellence. SAQA has a remarkable board of directors and a membership rich in talents and skills. I look forward to working with each and every one of you.

Without a doubt, these are exciting times for SAQA. I am eagerly anticipating the SAQA/SDA collaborative conference scheduled for early April in Philadelphia. A full prospectus has been mailed to all SAQA and SDA members, and you can also find it online at saqa.com > news.

Martha Sielman and Nelda Warkentin have worked closely with SDA's director Joy Stocksdale and her conference committee to come up with a fascinating group of speakers and workshops.

Keynote speakers Susan Brandeis and Michael and Judith James are certain to be captivating. I am equally interested to hear what Nancy Brakensiek has to say about collecting, Jacquie Atkins about textile currents, Pokey Bolton and Sunita Patterson about promoting and publishing artwork, Marilyn Henrion and Joanie San Chirico about breaking

into new markets and Jane Sauer about work on and off the wall. Workshops by Judy Langille, Jan-Meyers Newbury, and Kerr Grabowski, to name a few, will follow a day of bus tours to textile art exhibitions including the renowned Snyderman/Work's Fiber Biennial. As a bonus, the conference will take place at the Wayne Art Center in conjunction with the opening of *ArtQuilt Elements*. Due to the caliber of our speakers, proximity to a major art quilt exhibition and an easily accessible, inviting location, I fully anticipate this conference will be a "must do" for textile enthusiasts from all over.

In conclusion, I would like to say a few words of thanks to Katie PM for her efforts in making SAQA the vital organization it is today. With humor and insight, Katie was always there with an answer to a question, a word of encouragement, or a solution to a problem. There was never any doubt that Katie was committed to making

SAQA the best arts organization it could possibly be.

When I emailed her asking, "What are you going to do with all your new free time when you retire?" Katie wrote right back and assured me that she would still be there for me with advice (good news). She assured me that she would continue to volunteer for SAQA and would love to organize another *Art Gallery in a Box* (great news).

She also thought she might want to spend more time in the studio exploring her painted quilts, continue a full travel and teaching schedule, and likely write another book, or two, or three. And then there are her family and the miles and miles of horse trails in the mountains behind her New Mexico home that she plans to explore for 2-3 hours a day with her hiker's GPS and two dogs along for companionship.

We'll miss you, Katie. Thank you for giving SAQA so much of your remarkable energy for so many years.



On the cover:

ICE, 55" x 42", © 2006 Sandra Woock

Sandra Woock has always considered her affinity for fiber to be a driving force and passion, while research and discovery are necessities that allow her freedom for exploration of new materials and techniques. She creates each piece individually, painting lines and using color to evoke a sense of energy and momentum, using her distinct style to build a body of art with diversity and spontaneity.

See more of her work in the review on page 22 and on her web site, sandrawoock.com.

Report from the SAQA executive director

by Martha Sielman, www.marthasielman.com



I'm really looking forward to "Breaking New Ground" April 5-6, 2008 at the Wayne Art Center in Wayne, Pennsylvania. Please make the effort to attend this

conference — the collaboration between SAQA and the Surface Design Association has been highly synergistic. There was so much talent to tap into between the memberships of both organizations.

I will be the moderator for a panel that will be exploring issues related to collecting fiber. Board members Nancy Brakensiek and Penny McMorris will be part of that panel, along with GeorgeAnn Blaha an expert on and collector of woven fiber art. I'm particularly interested in exploring the issue of legacy — what

will happen if your children don't want your fiber art? This is important to all artists, as well as to collectors concerned with proper stewardship of the art in their collections.

Have you thought about this? It's a difficult thing to contemplate, but what do you want to happen to your artwork? Some of the best artwork will be cared for by institutions. I know that you're selling as much as you can and making gifts of some of it, but what about the rest? I don't have any answers here, just questions. I'm hoping that the panel discussion will generate some new ideas.

Portfolio 14 will be published by the time you're reading this. Each year it gets bigger and better. In cleaning out my files, I came across some of the older portfolios and the difference is incredible. This year's *Portfolio 14* includes work by 215 professional artist members. Cheryl Ferrin wrote a great Forward section discussing how

buying art is "like falling in love" and highlighting views of members' art quilts shown installed in offices and homes.

We will be selling *Portfolio 14* through the web site, at Festival (Oct. 31 – Nov. 4) and at SOFA-Chicago (Nov. 2-4), where we'll have a non-profit table for the first time. We'll also be sending copies to our VIP list of collectors, galleries, museums, and art consultants, as well as providing copies to Friends of Fiber Art's top tier members and to interested collectors at several galleries that specialize in fiber art, such as Jane Sauer's Gallery, Snyderman/Works Gallery, Translations Gallery, and Textures Gallery. Last year's distribution of *Portfolio 13* resulted in several sales, commissions, and invitations to exhibit for the members whose work was included. I expect that the response to *Portfolio 14* will be even better.

From the editor

by Carolyn Lee Vehslage, www.clvquilts.com



With this issue, we're starting a new column called "Highlighted Artist." We are going to feature artists who are on the brink of their professional

careers. We're looking for those who have a strong body of artwork and the drive to achieve national or international success. If you know someone

who fits this description, please let me know.

Deidre Adams does a fantastic job of laying out all the articles and images I collect for her. She has also been responsible for the recent *Creative Force* catalog and all of SAQA's stationery and postcard requirements. She's offered us excellent advice on digital images in her article, "Living up to the digital deal," on page 21.

The *Journal* doesn't come together

without the authors who volunteer their time and expertise to write the articles. I want to thank SAQA members Deidre Adams, Lisa Chipetine, Pat Dolan, Eileen Doughty, Antoinette Hall, Kevan Lunney, Clare Plug, Leni Weiner and Elizabeth Van Schaick for agreeing to write about the topics I dreamed up. They all came through with insightful articles.

Let us know what you would like to learn about in future *Journals*. Email me at clvquilts@yahoo.com.

Report from the SAQA exhibits committee

By Judith Content, vice president, exhibits committee chair

In order to focus on my new role as president of SAQA's board of directors, I am turning the chair of the exhibits committee over to board member Peg Keeney. Peg has been a member of the exhibits committee since its inception, and her vision for creating extraordinary exhibition opportunities has led to some of SAQA's most remarkable shows. We can thank Peg for curating the three *Transformations* exhibitions, (*Transformations '06*, *Reverberations '07* and *Icons and Imagery '08*) as well as *Twelve Voices* and *A Sense of Place*. I am confident that Peg will do an excellent job as chair, and I sincerely thank her for agreeing to take on this new responsibility.

Fortunately, Peg has a committee full of talented and committed individuals to work with her. Rose Hughes, coordinator of SAQA exhibitions, will be invaluable as she and Peg continue to reorganize, restructure and strengthen this fast-growing committee. Rose has turned her job of secretary over to a new exhibits committee member, Patricia Gould, co-rep from New Mexico. Pat brings many skills with her and will be a valuable asset to the committee.

Two additional newcomers to the exhibits committee are Gigi Kandler and Kathie Briggs. Kathie will prima-

rily assist with SAQA's traveling exhibitions. She has already worked with the committee as a volunteer and we are delighted to have her join our group. We affectionately refer to Gigi as our Digital Diva. She and Rose Hughes are heading up a new sub-committee to structure guidelines for an online digital entry system for SAQA exhibitions.

Arlene Blackburn has assumed Peg's previous job as exhibitions mentor. Arlene will continue to offer our members assistance if they wish to coordinate a regional or all-member SAQA exhibition. She can help with planning an exhibit, provide instructional documents, and help with insurance issues. She will maintain a resource book and act as a liaison between SAQA members and the exhibits committee. I am very excited to announce that she is currently working with Sue Dennis to organize our first SAQA exhibition in Australia.

Linda Colsh currently serves on the SAQA board and is the exhibit committee's international sub-committee chair. She is our eyes and ears abroad, always looking for ways to make SAQA vital to those outside the continental U.S. Most recently, Linda recruited an excellent juror for *Transformations '08: Icons and Imagery* — renowned German gallery owner

Rudolf Smend. I hope that many of SAQA's national and international members submit entries for *Transformations '08* and take advantage of the opportunity to have their work seen by such a respected individual in the field of textile art.

Karey Bresenhan has been the committee's board representative since the beginning. We have Karey to thank for many things, including negotiating the generous sponsorship Janome provided for *Creative Force '06* and *Creative Force '07 / Sense of Place*. *Creative Force* premiered last November at International Quilt Festival, and Janome's sponsorship assured a gallery-like venue and a full-color catalogue. Thanks as well to Kim Ritter, who stepped down from the exhibits committee to curate *Creative Force '07*, catalog designer Deidre Adams, and data-entry coordinator Gigi Kandler.

It has been a privilege to work with executive director Martha Sielman, all the members of the exhibits committee, and many more SAQA members who also contributed time and talent. I am constantly amazed at the skills of our members and at their willingness to share these gifts with SAQA. Thank you to everyone who has helped support the Studio Art Quilt Associate's exhibition program.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the SAQA Auction. Thank you to the artists who donated work. Thank you to the bidders, whose purchases will support SAQA's expanding marketing, outreach and education programs. Thank you to Lisa Chipetine, who first suggested to the rest of the board that an auction of small works would be fun. Thank you to Katie Pasquini Masopust for collecting and photographing all the pieces and for bringing them to the conference. Thank you to Eileen Doughty for setting up the auction on the web site and for testing the auction bid form until it worked properly. And

thank you to everyone who helped to spread the word about the auction.

The success of this auction has convinced the board to make this part of our ongoing fundraising efforts. A second One-Foot Squares auction is planned for Fall 2008.

FINAL STATS

Pieces sold: 139
Money raised: \$27,750

PRICE POINT INFO

\$750 – 7 pieces (\$5,250)
\$650 – 2 pieces (\$1,300)

\$550 – 8 pieces (\$4,400)
\$450 – 2 pieces (\$900)
\$350 – 5 pieces (\$1,750)
\$250 – 13 pieces (\$3,250)
\$150 – 58 pieces (\$8,700)
\$50 – 44 pieces (\$2,200)

Average price: \$200
Median price: \$150

BUYER INFO

73 buyers total: 59 members (81%) and 14 nonmembers (19%).
Buyers bought an average of 1.9 pieces; median number of 1 piece per person.

Board report

By Penny McMorris, secretary

I loved meeting so many of you at the April conference. Thanks to all of you who introduced yourselves to me. I have lots more faces to go with names now, and I look forward to being together with you again at the next conference in April 2008 in Philadelphia. Thanks to Martha Sielman and Nelda Warkentin, the conference committee has organized an exciting conference in conjunction with the Surface Design Association. It will include a wide variety of top-notch speakers and workshops, plus gallery and studio tours.

And it's never too early to block out dates for the mini conference we're planning for the Friday and Saturday of *Quilt National 2009*, which will offer lots of networking opportuni-

ties. Based on feedback from the conference evaluations, you wanted more networking time, so you shall have it!

Speaking of conferences, Martha suggested we needed a long-term planning committee for future conferences, so Lisa has agreed to share her Quilt National Conference expertise (thanks for your excellent conference planning, Lisa!) and Nelda Warkentin has volunteered to chair the committee. The board is also planning educational programs on creating artist's web sites, and we are examining the possibility of a negotiating a bulk rate for web programming.

We have invited two SAQA members to join the board, and we're so pleased that they have accepted. In September, we'll welcome Peg Keeney and Sandra

Sider to the board. Peg will also be taking over the chairmanship of the exhibits committee from Judith Content.

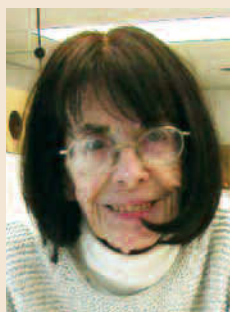
The board will sponsor a CREAM award at *ArtQuilt Elements*. Lisa is organizing sponsorship for the presentation of this CREAM award through memorial donations in honor of New York member Ina Stentiford, who recently passed away.

Patricia Bolton represented SAQA at the *Transformation '07* exhibit at the Festival of Quilts in England, where she gave a presentation on the state of the art quilt to a sellout audience.

Thanks for the feedback you give us, and for your work (a special thanks to the reps) and enthusiasm. We are all headed into an exciting Fall 2007/Spring 2008 SAQA season.

Meet your new board members

Peg Keeney



My art examines issues and ideas around our collective human experience. I invite viewers to come closer and enter my world, to appreciate its mystery and

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

For the past 6 years, I have been a full-time studio artist living in beautiful northern Michigan. My connection

with SAQA has provided me with a lifeline to the world of fine art and to a network of thoughtful, caring artists.

Sandra Sider



My love of quilts stems directly from family influences. I was seven years old when we moved to North Carolina, where I learned quilt

making and embroidery in Appalachia from my father's family. After our two children were born, I began thinking about making crib quilts. My first quilt was a modest production in the Bowtie pattern, a pastel crib quilt using scraps from my husband's discarded cotton shirts. After making a few more quilts using patterns, I lost patience with following

the rules and began experimenting with free-form appliqué and strip piecing, about 1975.

But what I really wanted to do was to put actual images on my quilts. I just did not know how. Then in 1979 we moved to New York City. A few years later, I located an old friend who was teaching photography. She wanted to experiment with printing images on fabric via cyanotype, or blueprinting, and we had several long studio sessions during which I became hooked on the process. By 1990, my first cyanotype quilt was completed. From there I never looked back — most of my quilts since then have used photographic imagery.

Having been a professional member of SAQA for quite a few years, I am delighted to become a member of the board. I look forward to serving this amazing organization that has meant so much in my life as an artist.

Time management

by Elizabeth Van Schaick

Most artists have concerns about using their time effectively, no matter what style or scale of art they make. Antoinette Hall administered a survey for SAQA in order to learn how artists spend and manage their time and what wisdom they might offer other artists. The eighteen SAQA member artists who submitted the completed survey were B.J. Adams, Elizabeth Barton, Ann Brauer, Lisa Chipetine, Jette Clover, Linda Colsh, Karen Eckmeier, Sylvia Einstein, Linda Gass, Deana Hartman, Barbara Hartman, Barbara McKie, Yvonne Porcella, Kim Ritter, Carol Taylor, Nelda Warkentin, Jill Rumoshosky Werner and Carolyn Lee Vehslage.

A significant finding from the survey was the difficulty artists found in even estimating average hours per week spent regularly on certain activities. This indicates that the nature of working as an artist often requires working intensely on a specific project during a certain period when it is pressing. Many responsibilities are time consuming but sporadic or unpredictable and must be attended to when the need becomes urgent. **Nelda Warkentin** explains:

"I don't assess my time per week. I think in terms of 6 months to a year. I travel, create work in my studio in Anchorage, spend time overseeing the construction of a second studio in Maine, work on the business aspects of being an artist, etc. In addition to creating new artwork (that is, spending a minimum of three hours per day 'touching the fabric'), one week, I may focus on developing an idea for a public art project, another week I may spend time getting my tax information together, another week I may be shipping artwork or getting ready for a trip. There is no one typical week for me. This is why I have set a personal goal to 'touch the fabric' a minimum of three hours a day."

Having this kind of goal of realistic blocked time is one way to meet the challenge of competing or unpredictable tasks.

Artists have very different working styles, and not all of them use their time in the same way every week or month. In addition, because the outside requirements of conference structures or exhibition procedures vary from case to case, the same activity may require varying amounts of time. However, presumably, keeping a record of time spent gives an artist a clearer and perhaps surprising view and is the first step in managing one's time. The artists' replies to the SAQA *Time Management Survey* provided valuable information about who devotes time to what art activities and how working time is allocated.

"This subject is something that is discussed a lot among my artist friends," **Barbara Hartman** notes. "We all seem to grapple with the same

issues, such as how to maximize the use of our time, how to motivate ourselves, and how to achieve more consistent production when there is no deadline involved. We all seem to be driven by the deadline and use that as the main motivator. I do have a couple of artist friends who seem to have all of their work issues under control and manage their work and family lives in a very efficient way, but they are the exception rather than the rule." Hartman advises, "If you're deadline driven, you're probably in the majority. Don't beat yourself up about it. If that's the way you work, just accept it as a fact. I have gotten better over time and try to keep a certain amount of organization and make lots of lists just so I know where I am. There is no magic solution to this. We all process information differently. This issue is a constant struggle for the artistic brain."

The strongest and most repeated



photo by Don Tuttle

Fields of Salt, 29.5" x 29.5", © 2007 Linda Gass



Overflowed

6" x 16" x 14"

© 2007 Jill Rumoshosky Werner

advice from artists was to cultivate organization and commitment.

Linda Colsh: "Be diligent and disciplined. Go into the studio and work. If it's not feeling good, go to the other studio (wet or dry) and work there."

Jette Clover: "Be committed. If you take your artwork seriously, others will, too."

Elizabeth Barton: "You have to put the art first, and then you have to beware of avoidance activity."

Setting specific goals was an absolutely essential tool for several artists. Karen Eckmeier claimed, "If I don't make a list and set goals in writing, it does not become a reality and it will not get done." **Nelda Warkentin** was systematic about it: "Set 10-, 5- and 1-year goals and identify what you need to do to accomplish the goals. Then, on a quarterly basis, assess what you're doing and what you want to accomplish in the next 6 months. Write this down, including target tasks and completion dates. Using a calendar, scope out what you need to accomplish and by what date. Stay focused." She goes on to offer this wisdom: "Decline those things that don't support your goals. Reserve time to create and make the best use of your precious creative time."

Total working time and studio time

Artists who pursue their art full time and those who do it part time both have to contend with how to allocate the available time to various tasks, from pure creation to technical chores and communication. Fifteen of the eighteen artists who responded

work at their art full time. The total hours of full-time work on all artistic endeavors varied. Four artists reported working up to 60 hours a week.

Others work between 10 and 40 hours a week, 5 to 7 days a week. Part-time artists have less total time available to spend on artistic pursuits, usually due to the responsibilities of a job or child rearing, so they are very aware of what they can and cannot work into their art time.

The survey noted the distinction between total time and time actually spent in the studio. Responses indicated that an artist's studio time is significantly less than total time in many cases, and the amount of time in the studio is not directly indicative of the amount of work the artist perceives she is completing. **Linda Gass** commented that not all of her creative or design time fits into so-called studio time: "My artwork involves quite a bit of research that most artists probably would not consider studio time, although I consider it part of my creative process on a piece. I spend time in libraries researching historic and contemporary photographs and texts, reading books on the subject matter of my pieces, tracking down maps, finding information on the Internet, and using mapping and satellite imaging software. Once I've done that, I then make sketches, create my paintings and quilt my finished paintings. If I had to put a percentage on my time in the studio, it would be about 30% of my time averaged out over a year."

Many of the participating artists had comments or advice on structuring their studio time. **Sylvia Einstein** urged, "Do the studio work when you feel energetic, do the computer work in less energetic times. If you work at home, make sure your family under-

stands that this is work. Don't answer the phone. Let the answering machine take it. It is very tempting to do laundry or clean if your work is not going well; try not to fall into that trap."

Similarly, **Carolyn Lee Vehslage** advised, "Develop a schedule that works for you. Find out what time of the day you're best at developing new designs, doing the construction, doing the quilting, doing the finishing work, doing the paperwork, and plan your day or week accordingly. Then commit to the time and do the work." For example, she explains, "I do administrative work and *SAQA Journal* editing for four hours each morning. In the afternoon, I paint. In the evening, I quilt or embellish. On weekends on our sailboat, I quilt. A few weekends a year, my husband helps me frame my quilted paintings." **Barbara McKie** wrote, "I try to set a particular time of day to be in the studio. I also leave something uncompleted so that I have something to start immediately when I get into the studio. If I have extra time, I clean up rather than finishing the project. This jump-starts me into productivity right away." **Lisa Chipetine** stated, "I work my art the same way I work my job as a project manager. I do it not to 'play' but with a very specific goal of accomplishment. For example, I will say, 'Today I will not leave my room until I construct the base for the quilt' or 'I will not leave the room until the right corner is designed.'"

Yvonne Porcella mentioned a trick for those who are short on time or subject to interruption: "When I first started concentrating on my art, I stood at a tall counter and worked in small units, being satisfied with a small accomplishment each day, even if I took only 20 minutes. I learned to sew standing up so that when I passed the counter, if I had a moment, I

See "Time Management" on page 8

Time Management

from page 7

would sew a seam or do what I could manage.”

Several artists responded that they do not purposely schedule or structure their time in the studio nor devote a preset amount of time to particular activities. **Linda Gass** wrote, “I rarely divide up my time in a given week along these lines. I typically will have crunch periods when all of my time is devoted to getting new pieces done for an exhibition or all of my time is devoted to getting a marketing project done, for example. These activities can go on exclusively for weeks and even months depending on the project.” She went on to explain, “I tend to work intensely for a period of time until my work is done and photographed and shipped off for an exhibition, and during that time, I only pay attention to the most critical items on the administration side of my work.” Some artists spend time on whatever inspires them on a given day.

The necessary evil: administration

Unfortunately, almost all artists who sell and/or exhibit need to devote time to the administrative side of their art business (for example, keeping records, paying bills, doing shipping, communicating with retailers and other administrators), and many perceive the business duties as time suckers. But most acknowledge administration is usually a requirement. The artists who were surveyed had made choices concerning the amount of time spent on computer work, entering exhibitions, creating class materials, and communication. Three responders claimed that they spent less than four hours a week on all administration tasks. Eleven out of the eighteen artists reported spending somewhere between 5 and 21 hours a week.

Preparing for exhibitions makes up a large portion of that administrative work for many serious artists. This involves paperwork, applications, computer communication, and pack-



Atmospheric Condition, 58" x 81", © 2006 Barbara Oliver Hartman

ing and shipping rather than creating. Participating in exhibitions of some kind is an integral part of being able to share one's art and receive important attention or feedback, but it is an investment. Several responders noted that the paperwork in this process takes a lot of their time. **Carol Taylor** had some notes on making the exhibition process more time efficient:

“I enter a lot of shows, so this does take a good deal of my time. Fortunately, I keep my paperwork up to date and have all of my “blurbs” about each quilt made and in the computer. It's part of finishing each quilt along with photography. The photos are there too, and my slides are filed and labeled so they're ready to go as I need them for shows.

“I keep a folder and a list of shows chronologically by entry due dates. Under each show I enter the restrictions, like the years the quilts can be made, the dates the quilts will be gone, and the notification date. These are all necessary details because many shows overlap, and you can't enter the same quilt in two shows with overlapping dates.

“I try to think about which quilts I want to enter in which shows way ahead of time, and I may type in four to six choices on my sheet at first.

Then I let the choices percolate and eventually eliminate all but the two or three I will enter in each show. Sometimes I consider which of two or three shows should get one quilt and then will have to make substitutions to the other shows. Making these final decisions about which quilt to enter in which show is always a big relief. Once it's decided, then the rest is just time-consuming paperwork that I can deal with once I've made the big decision.”

Artists indicated that they might spend 4 to 8 hours per exhibition they enter. **Barbara Hartmann** suggested that the total time can be reduced by having art pieces organized in a way that's easy to prepare for shipping and working with a gallery that takes on the marketing, sales, and some of the handling. **Linda Gass** wrote that carefully reviewing exhibition contracts takes a half day on average and is worth the time. On the flip side, **Carolyn Lee Vehslage** said that working as an organizer of an exhibition, an artist may spend roughly 2-4 8-hour days in the months leading up to the exhibition. This may include writing for a leaflet or catalog, writing emails, doing research, and photography.

Each artist must decide how much

time they can devote to entering exhibitions, and some choose to enter only occasionally or try to minimize the time spent by streamlining their entries or packaging and shipping process. **Karen Eckmeier** wrote, "I used to be involved with up to 12 exhibitions a year. The time involved was astronomical and disproportionate to the income earned. I don't do them anymore because of the time factor and shipping costs. I would rather use my time creating and marketing my business, especially since I am not an exhibiting artist, but a teaching artist."

Marketing and sales

Although at least some marketing is necessary for most artists, the type of marketing activity and how much time is devoted to it are decisions for the individual. Some are enthusiastic. Put into a purposeful, directed activity, time invested in marketing may pay off. Half of the artists surveyed have their own web sites that they work on maintaining at least a few hours a week. **Linda Gass** discussed her extensive marketing activity:

"I regularly try to promote my artwork through my web site and through press releases, postcard mailings, and submitting my artwork to different juried exhibitions and venues. This involves having professional-quality photographs of my artwork taken on a regular basis. I design and maintain my own web site and, on average, I spend 80-100 hours per year updating it. I write my own press releases depending on how much promotion will be done by the venue I'm exhibiting in, and the same goes for designing and mailing my own postcards. I regularly maintain my mailing list, adding new names and sometimes pruning it to keep the size down. Marketing activities take up most of the administrative time of my art career."

Marketing and promotions take many forms. **Jill Rumoshowsky Warner**

wrote, "I am not only an artist, but I'm also a technical writer and marketing expert, so I produce a lot of my marketing materials myself. However, I recently spent several months collaborating with graphic designers to upgrade my materials, including a new logo, brochure and business card. At the same time, I created a slide portfolio and upgraded the look of my web site." **Nelda Warkentin** takes a periodic but ongoing approach: "About every three months, I think ahead and update my marketing plan. I have a 'recurring tasks' database that I use to monitor submissions to organizations such as Studio Art Quilt Associates, Friends of Fiber Art, etc., and magazines. I make an effort to correspond one or two times a year with those who have acquired one of my works. I maintain a marketing 'to-do' list in my palmOne™ handheld organizer, which includes show entry deadlines, galleries to contact, etc. That keeps me on track with my marketing ideas and plans. I review and prioritize this list daily, looking ahead one to two weeks."

Survey responses indicated that very few of these established art quilt/fiber artists participate in art fairs. "I don't do art fairs as such, as I don't make many small pieces and

that's what sells best in this forum," says **Carol Taylor**. However, **Ann Brauer** said that she finds arts fairs very successful, and she participated in 10 shows last year. Each involved 4-8 days of her time between packing, traveling, setting up, participating in the show itself, and returning and unpacking.

Writing

When asked how much time per week they spend writing, the responders gave widely varying answers. Aside from the artist's statement, many artists reported that they spent little or no time on any kind of writing, or tried to minimize the time in favor of other artistic activities. Approximately one third of the artists spend a small amount of time writing — only instructions and/or basic workshop and lecture materials. Several artists mentioned spending time writing articles. **Yvonne Porcella**, **Kim Ritter**, and **Karen Eckmeier** reported either having written a book in the past or spending time currently writing new books. Four artists claimed they regularly spend ten hours a week or more on writing for workshops, lectures, articles and/or other material for art organizations.

See "Time Management" on page 30

Time well spent

7 out of 18 artists spend their time making only art that will be for sale. 4 of them reported spending 4-12 hours a week, one reported 14 hours a week, and 3 spend 35 hours or more per week on this.

3 artists reported spending most or all of their art-making time on art that will be for display only.

1 artist spends most of her art-making time on art made for demonstration or lecture only.

5 artists said they spend time making art for more than one of these goals, or that their art may be used in any of these three ways.

Approximately 25% of the artists surveyed said that they do not structure or schedule their studio time; they spend time on matters as they become most pressing.

12 out of 18 artists spend some time preparing for or entering exhibitions. 3 reported spending at least 8 hours a week on exhibition preparations.

10 artists — over 50% — devoted significant time to teaching workshops. Several reported that this time varies and is concentrated right before workshop or travel.

Mentorship sessions

by Lisa Chipetine

Life is serendipitous. You start out trying to solve a simple problem and end up with an idea that has a far broader scope than you had first envisioned.

After deciding to leave my job in New York City in order to work closer to home, I was faced with the problem of continuing meetings with the SAQA New York membership. I had been holding the meetings quarterly at City Quilter in the city, which would now be a major inconvenience. I asked myself, "How can I keep the group together without having a physical meeting?" The answer: a conference call. But there was the cost factor. I certainly couldn't fund 140 members on a paid service conference call plan. Then I found www.freeconferencecall.com.

Freeconferencecall.com is a free service whereby you sign up for an account that provides you with a dial-in number. You provide your email address and are required to renew your account after six months. This renewal only takes place once. You are provided with a host (call initiator) code and a participant code that is given to the people participating. You are allowed up to 96 callers on the line and can stay on the line for up to six hours. Your account is allowed an unlimited number of conference calls and you can log on to the freeconferencecall.com website to view reports on the number of participants and time used.

Recently, this service launched the ability to record the calls for free. The calls are saved on the website as .wav (sound) files that can be downloaded and distributed to those who missed the call (the .wav files allow you to listen on your computer, or they provide a special call-in number that allows you to replay the call). It's perfect for those who miss the call, live overseas (as this is a U.S.-based service,) or have to leave the call early.

I decided to pilot the program with my New York membership to test its effectiveness. The only cost attached to this service is each individual caller's long distance cost. Given the cable/telephone and cell phone packages that are now predominant in the marketplace, the majority of individuals could participate for a very low cost.

I picked a Tuesday evening at 8:00 for the call. Midweek — after dinner, kids, spouses, etc. — seemed to be a good time for people to take some time for themselves.

Given that I have professional meeting facilitation experience, I knew the importance of keeping control of the call and having an agenda and a response protocol.

I put the announcement of the call out on the SAQA New York Yahoo group and sent an email broadcast to the entire New York membership. I requested that the group RSVP and said that topics and responses would be on a first-come, first-served basis. With this RSVP list, I was able to create an agenda which was then distributed.

That first call was a resounding success. We had 15 people, and I was able to get more feedback from my membership in this 1½ hour call than I had been able to get in the past two years.

The participating members were from all over the state, bridging the geographical gap that is problematic for most regions. My fear of losing control of the call turned out to be unwarranted. Members were courteous and everyone got a chance to state their ideas and/or opinions. I was able to go to the board with this feedback, which is resulting in new articles for the *Journal*, new and better ways to communicate, and issues that needed to be addressed.

Some of the things I discovered are: It is important to have a time limit

on the call; you can always save additional discussions for a future date. You should also take a roll call at the beginning of the call so that everyone can get a chance to hear one another's voices and where they are from. If your participants have a mute button available, encourage them to use it when they are not speaking to cut down on the background noise.

For the second call, I decided to invite a guest host. I picked my friend Carol Schepps, who has extensive experience dealing with and selling successfully through galleries. We picked a title for her topic: *Selling Your Work: Working with Galleries*. Again, I requested an RSVP, and I asked for questions which I forwarded to Carol prior to the call. Carol then took this opportunity to review the RSVP list, Google my members, and view their individual sites.

One of my members, Ruth White, had indicated that a fiber group she belonged to was meeting that evening and she had been able to borrow a conference phone from work, so we were joined by Ruth and the "Divas" (some of the 12 ladies were SAQA members and some were not — a wonderful opportunity to recruit!). This second call was also a success, and Carol really enjoyed the experience. Then I had an epiphany: this concept could be used to institute a mentorship program for SAQA.

SAQA members have consistently stated that they want a mentorship program. Most people want a mentor; however, few want to *be* a mentor, fearing the time and energy commitments that being a mentor could potentially entail. Having a mentorship session in the form of a conference call alleviates this problem. The potential mentor is only being asked to give 1-1½ hours of their time once a year and is able to address a large number of people. The mentor may

gain useful resources and contacts while imparting expertise in the development of emerging artists.

Presentation materials and photographs associated with the session could be posted to either a Yahoo group or web site for review before the call, giving fodder for discussion.

This would be an excellent way to have a critique session.

The excitement of the potential of this process overtook me, and I set about approaching individuals within my own membership as well as subject matter experts across the country to be my monthly mentors, establishing a structured program in the process. So far, I have booked the next four months with the following mentors presenting specific topics:

Shelita Birchett:

Professional Presentation Materials for Your Art (www.skitzoscrap.com)

Margaret Cusack

Tips for Self Promotion (www.margaretcusack.com)

Melanie Testa

Creativity Crisis: How Do You Spell Relief? (www.melaniemesta.com)

Judith Content

Effectively dealing with Museums and Galleries (http://jsauergallery.com/sagemoon/artistPages/jcon_lg.html)

When I hosted the first SAQA reps conference call and explained the mentorship program initiative, the regional reps were very excited, as this program would solve the problem of having members who were unable to drive hundreds of miles for a regional meeting. I have encouraged them to find a volunteer within their membership to be the mentorship series coordinator and to use feedback from their membership to structure the topics to be addressed.

Please contact your regional representatives NOW to let them know



Ladies, It's a Jungle Out There
28" x 28", © 2006 Lisa Chipetine

what interests you — or if you would like to be a mentorship series coordinator or monthly mentor. This is a wonderful way to engage your entire regional membership and optimize the skill sets of the entire SAQA membership! ▼

SAQA board of directors member and past 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.

Editor's note: Margaret Cusack's mentoring session is now available on the SAQA web site at saqa.com > **members** > **members home**.

Tips for a successful conference call

Control

1. RSVP List – first come, first to speak
2. Do a roll call at the beginning with everyone introducing themselves
3. Response to questions — go through roll call list with facilitator prompting each speaker

Agenda

Indicate participants by name

Example: conference call on selling your work:

1. Lisa Chipetine – What is the average commission charged by a gallery?
2. Carolyn Vehslage – How do you get gallery representation?

3. Martha Sielman – Can you deal with more than one gallery at once?

Time

Limit to 1-1½ hour
8:00 pm works best

Signing in via conference call

You will receive a dial in number from your rep accompanied by a participant code (your rep obtains by enrolling in freeconferencecall.com)

Example:

Dial in number: (712)-xxx-xxxx
Once dialed in, you will be prompted for a code. Enter the code plus “#”

Blogging: who, what, when, where, and why?

by Pat Dolan

Many people have asked me versions of the above questions ever since I began blogging over two years ago. As a sixty-something woman interested in the arts, nature, spirituality, holistic health, and genealogy, whatever possessed me to start blogging, of all things?

It wasn't because of the grandkids, although they were already keeping LiveJournals and now have MySpace web addresses. It wasn't because anyone I knew thought it was a good idea. In 2004, I was still of the opinion that blogging was only for those who wanted to toot their own horns; that it was an activity for braggarts (or so it seemed at the time).

In 2005, I purchased a state-of-the-art digital SLR camera so I wouldn't have to spend so much on professional photography. I'd been an amateur photographer for most of my life and quickly discovered the ease of digital photography and the fun of sharing photos via email and the web. I also wanted to build some Internet presence for my art, but I was neither ready nor able to establish my own web site at that time.

With the help of the QuiltArt list and their Artful Quilter's Web Ring, I began researching blogs that related to art quilts. Here I found a whole world of fiber artists working with quilting as their medium and sharing their insights on artwork, families, and pets. I was enthralled at the ease with which I could discover new fiber artists around the globe and was fascinated by the discoveries I made reading the blogs of other artists.

So blogging suddenly became a web PR solution for me — it gave me a way to share my art that was free. And the Artful Quilter's Web Ring provided an instant readership that I might otherwise never have found. Over time, blogging became a place for me to share myself: my art, my perspectives, and my photography of

wildlife, travel, and flowers.

That's the when, where and why of my blogging journey. The how is somewhat more difficult to explain, despite the ease with which one can establish a blog. Perhaps, because I've used computers since our Commodore 64 back in the early days of computers, I found much of the work of establishing a blog rather intuitive. The official Blogger™ web site provides clear, concise directions for establishing a blog site.

Below are answers to some frequently asked questions regarding starting and maintaining a blog:

1. How do you start a blog?

Blogger.com is a user-friendly web site, making it easy to set up a new blog. There is an initial questionnaire from which I selected the appearance of my blog, the look and style such as format and typeface, how much personal data to include, whether or not to add a photo of myself, and more. I went through the selection process one step at a time to create my first journal entry a bit over two years ago.

2. How do you add images and text to the blog?

To write a new posting, I go to the Blogger Dashboard for my blog and select "create" or "new post." Then, I simply begin writing in the space provided. However, if I'm creating a tutorial, I like to see it complete in either Microsoft® Word® or PowerPoint® prior to posting it on the net. That way, I know what photos should go where and I can make sure the sequence of the steps is correct.

To add images, one click on the photo icon at the New Post site brings up my picture files from my own database. I simply find the appropriate folder in my files, locate the desired photo, and then select it for uploading to my posting.

The only potential problem with

adding photos using Blogger is that the photos always come in at the start of the posting — and they come in computer-speak, not as images. I generally upload several photos at once, and then I have to cut and paste each photo to move it where I want it in the body of the post. If I want to see the images, I select "Preview" from the New Post page to see how everything will appear in the final format.

3. How do you let people know when you've added something new?

Blogger.com automatically informs anyone who has subscribed to *Pat's Art Journal* whenever I've made a new entry.

4. How do you know how many people have visited your blog?

The best way is by receiving comments on the posting from visitors to the page. Since I'm part of the Artful Quilters Web Ring, my blog has frequent visitors, a few of whom make comments or ask questions. I always answer any questions I receive. If the question is art related, I reply directly on the blog so that others can read it. If it's more personal, I reply via email.

Joining a web ring is a sure-fire way to insure visitors to your blog. If I want to join another web ring, I go to the web site www.ringsurf.com. Then I select the "Arts" category, then "alternative," which brings up a full listing of blogs related to "alternative art." Other potential web rings I might consider are Surface Design, Dyers Web Ring, or Bead Artists Who Blog. As of July 2, there were 360 web rings in this category to choose from. I could go back to the original page and select the "Crafts" category and come up with another 248 potential web rings to join, including Bloggers who Embellish, Quilt Studio, Fiber Art Friends, and Fiber U. Each ring I join has the potential to bring new visitors almost guaranteed to have an interest in what I do.

Red Ribbons
44" x 32"
© 2007 Pat Dolan

Another way to see how many people have viewed the blog is by the visitor counter, which is made available by Blogger.com. My counter is located at the bottom of the page. Today it says 25,086 people have visited the site since I first posted in February of 2005. If I want more information about my visitors, I can go to the counter's site and learn more. For instance, 66% of the overall visitors are from the U.S., 8% are from Canada, 9% from England, 5% from Germany, followed by lesser percentages from Brazil, Poland, New Zealand, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, Australia, and "unknown." Today, 20 visitors have viewed the blog, and 197 have visited this week.

5. Why did you choose to have a blog instead of a web site?

The primary reason was financial. I wanted to create a web presence but

See "Blogging" on page 28



More bloggers share their experiences...

"I just think this is part of a big trend and change in how the Internet helps artists – a move from static websites to dynamic websites. Blogs are dynamic and can be easily created with free software like Blogger."

Pam RuBert
<http://pamdora.com/blog/>

"Regularly written, and preferably illustrated with pictures or diagrams, [blogs] are a moving sideline to a more fixed, probably more formal, website, and the two complement each other as parts of an online portfolio. The blog has the ability to reveal more about the artist as a thinking human being than shows in a web site alone."

Alison Schwabe
<http://alisonschwabe.blogspot.com>

"My book agent insisted I have a blog because it's a good way to be found on the web, even if you have a website. In my blog, I turned comments off. If someone wants to write to me

to discuss anything, they are free to do it privately via email."

Jeanne Williamson Ostroff
<http://jeannewilliamson.blogspot.com/>

"I like having a blog so I can document the artwork that I am doing. Yes, eventually it will go on the web site, but for right now there is an instant gratification element. This is about my journey as an artist, not about family or vacations."

Jamie Fingal
<http://JamieFingalDesigns.blogspot.com>

"What is your goal in having a blog? If you share things of interest to you in a way you'd want to read, then you'll be more inclined to keep it up. You may even want to have more than one blog – a more wordy one, a more picture intense one, a personal opinion one, etc."

Susan Alderson
<http://thisandthatfromhere.blogspot.com>
<http://icemoosey.blogspot.com>

Leni Levenson Wiener

As many of my generation did, I learned to sew in home economics class in junior high. I have always made my own clothes and traditional quilts, but neither fulfilled my artistic needs. For many years, I was an art photographer doing abstract photos. I've also been a clay sculptor.

I started making art quilts years ago, but I had no idea there was a world of other art quilters. In 2002 I went to Quilt Market in Houston, where I was overwhelmed and inspired, and I knew that I had found my medium.

Through the years, I have developed a strong, almost instinctive sense of color. From photography I gained an understanding of composition and value (black-and-white photography is all about value), and from sculpture, dimension and texture. I consider my pieces value studies more than anything else.

I still see the world through a photographer's eyes, but I do not work from abstract photos — those are already art on their own. My digital camera is with me at all times, and I have hundreds of photos saved on the computer. My pieces always start with one or more photos, manipulated or combined on the computer, and blown up to full size so that proportion and value are mapped out.

Although I am greatly influenced by artists in many media, my art is a personal journey. Nature inspires me — primarily trees, rocks, water, and people. As a former archaeologist, I also have a passion for stone walls.

I am drawn to compositions that suggest perspective, like a path meandering through trees, angled architecture, or stairs with strong light and shadow. I love the juxtaposition of hard angles and straight lines against the softness of the human form. The people in my artwork are usually introspective and reflective, as if unaware of the viewer. This draws

viewers into the artwork and requires them to create their own story.

Finding my voice was as much an evaluation of my strengths and interests as a decision to avoid things I don't like to do. I need to see a piece develop quickly, so precision piecing and hand sewing are not for me. My artwork is a combination of raw-edge machine appliqué and thread painting. There is immediacy about both methods; I like the fraying edges, the bumps and puckers that are inherent in fabric. If I wanted flat surfaces and clean edges, I might as well be working in paper.

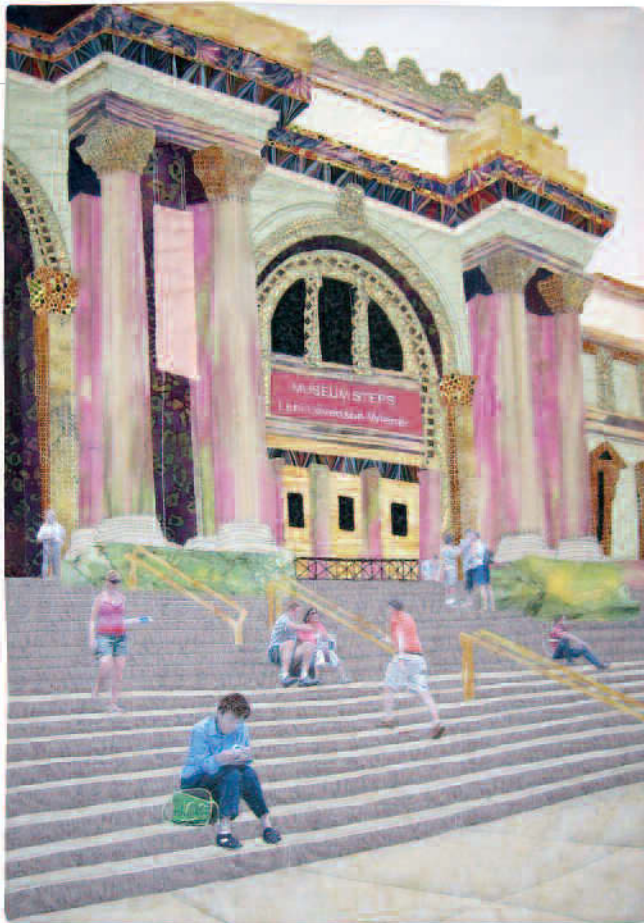
My artwork is very much about the process. When young children draw or paint, anyone who compliments their work is instantly rewarded with

the artwork. Why? For children, the process is the product, which opens them to experiment and enjoy the act of art without regard for the end result. I stress this to my students, and for me it is key — interpreting my vision in fabric and enjoying the process is what separates making art from mass producing tote bags. If the process isn't invigorating, it is just another source of stress.

In my first year as a serious fiber artist, I entered eight juried shows and was unanimously rejected. I was still struggling to find my voice and offered a range of styles in each submission. I now know that was a waste of time and money. Since then, I have concentrated on developing a consistent, distinct style. I tend not to



Private World, 51" x 43", © 2007



Left: *Museum Steps*, 30" x 21", © 2007

Below: *An Outstretched Hand*, 30" x 21", © 2007



work in series. I consider all of my artwork a series — there is continuity of subject, color, and execution.

Surprisingly, the biggest change in my artwork has come from an unexpected source. When my oldest son got his first apartment, my studio moved from a closet-sized room into his larger bedroom. I now have the space for a very simple but effective design wall, which allows me to work much larger and therefore in greater detail. As my artwork evolves, it becomes more detailed and nuanced.

My development has been a series of little successes strung together. I am proud to have written a book, *Thread Painting* (Krause, August 2007), but I feel it's a reflection of me more as instructor than as artist. Having my piece *Museum Steps* accepted into *Tactile Architecture* in Houston this year was a high point. I am on the cusp of public exposure; so far this year I have had several pieces accepted into juried shows.

Marketing is tough for me. I hope that acceptance into more shows, as

well as an expansion of my teaching through my book, will make me more visible and that greater visibility will lead to sales of my artwork. Getting paid for artwork is a validation, and

*Getting paid for
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me it is an
important one.*

for me it is an important one. For now, my income is from teaching both traditional and art quilting. The contact with people is important to

balance my solitary studio life. I especially love teaching beginners; it's a thrill to help create a new quilter.

I have no long-term plan; I do this more because I am compelled to than to build a career. On the days that I am not in the studio, or at least working out a technical problem in my head, I am anxious and depressed. Art is my drug and my therapy. I love working in a medium that has simple, honest origins in the domain of women. I feel connected to the generations of quilters whose kinship was needle and thread.

If there comes a time when people see an art quilt and remark "that looks like a Leni Wiener," then I will finally know that I have made it. ▼

SAQA active member and New York co-representative Leni Levenson Wiener resides in New Rochelle, New York. Her web site is www.leniwiener.com

SAQA member gallery: *Autumn Splendor*

B.J. Adams

A Classical Palette

31" x 40" © 1999

www.bjadamsart.com

Over the faint image of a bare tree, nature's hand is coloring pale leaves for the coming season. The idea for this artwork came to me as I was stitching (painting) autumn leaves for another work.



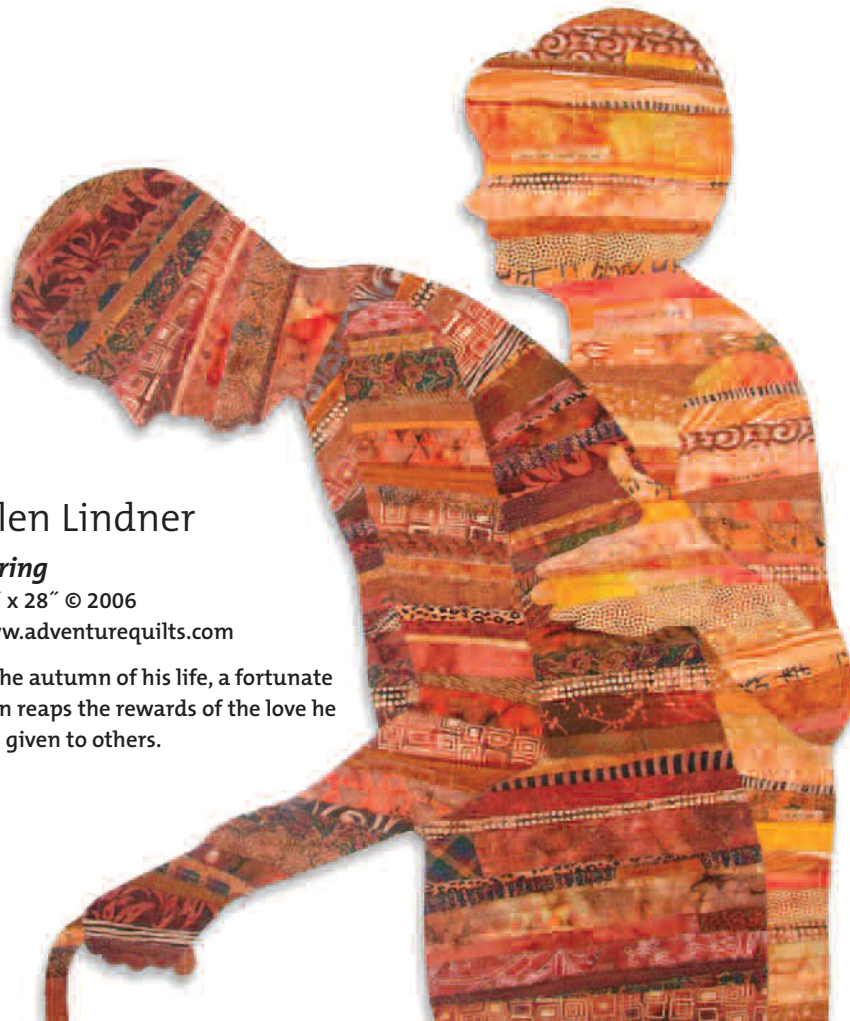
Ellen Lindner

Caring

40" x 28" © 2006

www.adventurequilts.com

In the autumn of his life, a fortunate man reaps the rewards of the love he has given to others.





Merle Axelrad Serlin

Tree Part 5

48" x 33" © 2005

www.axelradart.com

This is one of a five-piece series commissioned as public art for the new City Hall in Sacramento, California, known as the "City of Trees." Individual tree parts are linked vertically through the five-story building with the roots on the first floor (Tree Part 1) and the leaf canopy on the top floor (Tree Part 5). Each collage depicts a different species, focusing on the importance of diversity in our urban forests and in our community. Tree Part 5 depicts the leaves of a ginkgo tree in glorious fall color.

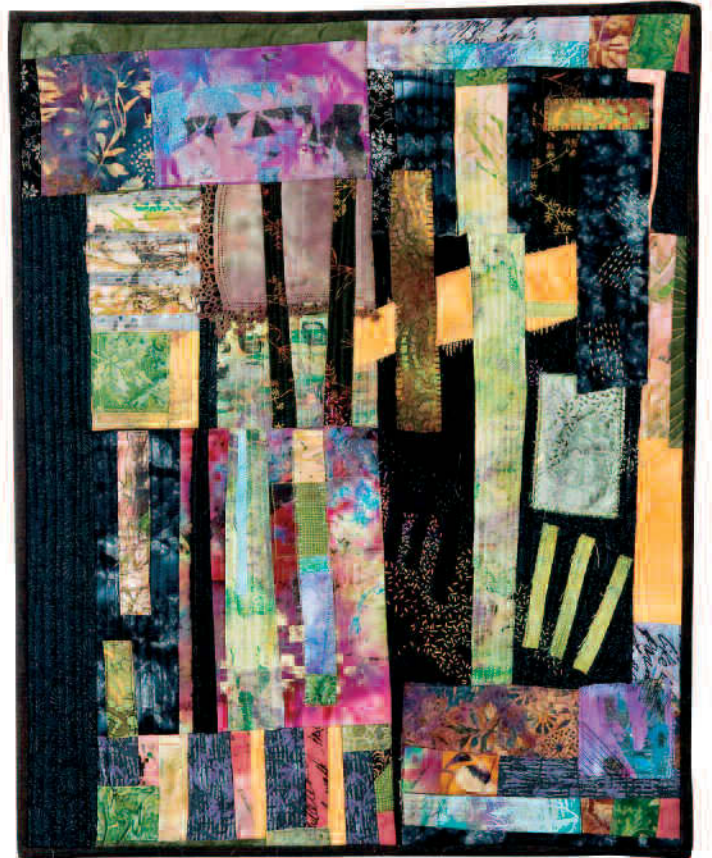
Linda Branch Dunn

Through the Woods

25" x 20" © 2007

lindabrandhdunn.com

Inspired by the trees I walk past every morning. Their trunks look so solid, and the light breaks as it falls through their branches.



Susie Monday

El Cielo: Sumac

22" x 20" x 2" © 2006

susiemonday.squarespace.com

This wall altar is inspired by the Texas hill country autumn and includes artist-made fabrics, overdyed vintage fabrics, and a photographic transfer of a sumac branch.

Quilt National '07

A trend towards more representational artwork

By Kevan Rupp Lunney

The *Quilt National '07* art quilt exhibition at the Dairy Barn gallery in Athens, Ohio, this past May was as exciting and visually stimulating as I remember from my last visit there in 1995.

I see part of the show every year when it travels to Quilters Heritage in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. On my recent trip to Athens to see the entire show, I noticed four trends in the overall look of the artwork compared to years past. There was an increased use of realistic and photographic imagery, an increase in works with the theme of world events and politics, more subdued and sophisticated colors, and more three-dimensional works.

Since *Quilt National* usually exhibits 80-88 total pieces, I wanted to tabulate how an increased use of realistic and photographic images would cause a corresponding decrease in the number of abstract works.

I surveyed the artwork from seven catalogs of *Quilt National* exhibits. I also checked my findings with the Dairy Barn, who concurred with my premise.

I categorized each artwork into one of three groups:

1. Realistic — Incorporating a photographic process or painted very realistically.

2. Representational — those quilts in which I can recognize some object, but they are either very abstracted or in cartoon form, or an unrealistic sketch or drawing. For instance, there may be a photo of a hand in a tree, but the overall look of the quilt is not realistic or photographic.

3. Abstract — no recognizable images.

The results are summarized in the table below.

There is a trend at the show for less abstract works and more realistic and representational work. One wonders, is there an overall trend in the art quilt medium towards representational/realistic images or does the change merely reflect the preferences of the judges at *Quilt National* over 12 years?



The Pressure Cooker/Tower: Card #16 in the Kitchen Tarot, 87" x 67", © 2006 Susan Shie, turtlemoon.com

Quilt National Year	Total	Abstract	Representational	Realistic/ photographic	Political	3D
1995	84	59	13	12	3	0
1997	80	51	22	7	4	0
1999	82	54	19	9	2	3
2001	88	53	32	4	1	0
2003	85	51	23	10	5	0
2005	81	39	24	13	5	2
2007	83	48	20	15	11	5



Utility Quilting Series: Ironing Board
16" x 55", © 2006 Julie John Upshaw

Photography more prevalent

In previous shows there was more evidence of intricate piecing to create patterning. However, in recent years the increased use of photography as a design element itself or as part of other surface design techniques contributes to an entirely different aesthetic. Thelma McGough's *Dress Circle* is a repeated block made entirely of photos of a building with zigzagging balconies. While photographic images bring the viewer closer to reality and a specific time and place, sometimes the artist layers several techniques that can cloud the image and suggest a more mysterious meaning. Design interest is achieved with more push and pull between the elements of piecing, photography, painting, and stitching. Other examples include Mary Ann Tipple's *Our Dads at War*, Linda Colsh's *The Crack in the Teacup*, and Patricia Mink's *Concrete Abstraction II*.

More political themes

We are seeing more quilts dealing with political and cultural issues. It seems more artists are addressing these and similar questions: Who am I? Where do I fit in? What is the direction of my future? Most of these quilts fall into the representational, non-photographic category.

One notable example of this trend is Susan Shie's *The Pressure Cooker/ Tower Card #16 in the Kitchen Tarot*, where she places herself firmly in August of 2006 with her diary and socio-political commentary covering the entire surface. The word-strings form the contours of the Statue of Liberty, faces, and a toppling tower of pressure cookers. She says it represents the "Tower" card, in which runaway power is ready to fall.

Other representational works conveying a feeling of political insecurity and questioning the balance of power

were Katherine Knauer's *New New York Beauty*, Linda MacDonald's *So Many People 1*, Anne McKenzie Nickolson's *Who Will Lead Us?*, Barbara Otto's *Conflagration Series #2: The Firebombing of Dresden*, Judith Plotner's *Are We Safer Now?*, Robin Schwalb's *Chinese Characters*, and Kathy Weaver's *Robo Sapien: Agent 1*.

Quilts leave the wall

The other difference that I noticed is an increase in the amount of artwork that is three-dimensional or has considerable relief. These works were either free-standing on a pedestal or had greater relief than that caused by found objects stitched on the surface.

This year there were five pieces in this category; two of these did not

hang on the wall. Mary Beth Bellah's *Rising Water* was a free standing interpretation of a wave of water, which illustrates a transition from the traditional quilt world to contemporary art quilts with its flat panel of quilted squares in traditional fabrics lying on the pedestal, which rise up into a jumbled wave of pale blue squares with spaces of air between them, reminiscent of *Great Wave Off Kanagawa*, a woodcut print by Katshishika Hokusai.

The other was Julie John Upshaw's *Utility Quilting Series: Ironing Board*, which was quite literally a quilted ironing board cover on a new and functional ironing board. It was

See "Quilt National" on page 20



The YoYo Quilt, 70" x 64", © 2006 Martha Bruin Degen

stitched with the image of a slinking alien-like figure who seemed to be unhappily contained by the constraints of the board's boundaries. She had a plunger-like shape attached to her head that she is pulling with her own hand towards the narrow end. I sympathized with the artist's question, "Does creative expression in cloth and stitch bring freedom or constraint?"

One of the most intriguing pieces in the show to me was by Martha Bruin Degen, titled *The Yo Yo Quilt*, which exhibited all four trends. It was a pixelated image of George W. Bush that used photographic technology to produce an image with a political theme. Its colors were more subdued, and it had three-dimensional elements (albeit still close to the wall).

It was an intricate bitmap created with old-fashioned yo-yos, whole and spliced, depicting a modern political figure in shades of black, white and gray. The gray prints were actually hand-printed donkeys and elephants with miniscule stars on their backs. And if that wasn't enough to draw you in, there was Old Glory peeking between the spaces of the yo-yos. This is a fantastic example of how an image can read at a great distance, then draw you in to discover more and more detail and reward the viewer with meaning.

Abstracts still in focus

Although I have focused on what I perceive to be a growing trend at *Quilt National* towards representational imagery, I do not want to ignore the abstract quilts that are still in the majority. I wish to call attention to a few which have strong appeal and good composition.

Sara Impey's *Conversation Piece* is a large grid in ocher and black with a black letter in each box. There is an overlay of circles in a lighter color that tricks your eye into seeing them as transparent. A strip on the right border reverses the values. There is one circle that pales to white and,

according to the standard artist's rule of thirds, is in the perfect spot to create a focal point. This quilt is intriguing to look at because your brain struggles to make meaning of the words, and phrases jump out but they don't connect to each other. Like a huge search-and-find puzzle, it occupies my mind trying to make connections — up, down, diagonally, and backwards. The phrases "THE THING IS," "BASICALLY," and "AS I WAS SAYING," jump out at me. And to borrow a few phrases, I will say that "THE THING IS," "COOL," "AND," "I SUPPOSE," "IN MY OPINION," even cooler when you get up close and realize that the whole effect is achieved with stitches on a nearly whole-cloth background.

Dotted Four Patch by Mary Ann Jordan is also a grid. I was captivated by the perceived relief of the hand-dyed black dots which seemed plush and velvety, their running dye shadows making them seem to pop off the white surface. The interest is created by using only one repeated element, and the negative space is remarkably varied and quite well done. Jordan skillfully grabs our attention with the lonely black dot to the lower right. I am not sure whether to cheer for its independence or feel sad because it may have been left behind.

Regina V. Benson's *Surround Sound* felt like the promise of a new day. Both sides curved toward the viewer in a hug of warm, glowing color, with yellow at the bottom graduating through oranges, and finally to black at the top. She invites us to "feel our inner music." I'm feelin' it!

Strong compositional artwork

I also want to highlight a few more pieces that stand out for their strong composition. Melanie Testa's *Repose* is a marvel of surface design techniques. Multiple layers of sheers are painted and monoprinted to create a complex yet delicate environment for a seated nude. The fluid line used to contour the figure is crisp and lyrical, leaving

enough unsaid to make you want to know more about her.

Our Dads at War, by Mary Ann Tipple, has similar qualities where images overlap, but here the layering is paint and photo images. Almost a four-patch composition, the artist grabs us with the different scale of the figures in each quadrant and shocks us with the concentric rings which may suggest that these soldiers are within the range of ground zero.

Symmetry and variety seem to be opposites, but Linda Colsh accomplishes this balancing act beautifully in *The Crack in the Teacup*. A large cross segments the space, and all the negative space around it is filled with similar but different divisions of space. Just as fascinating are the painted images, including an old woman trudging away from us with her cane. She seems so small compared with the monumental size of the cross. We are asked by Colsh, "Does anyone notice?"

Other compositions that hold the viewers' interest are Judith Plotner's *Are We Safer Now?*, Noriko Endo's *Sylvan Ambience #2*, Barbara Schneider's *Reflections, Var. 8: Bushy Creek, Kansas Missouri*, Robyn Schwalb's *Chinese Characters*, and Eleanor McCain's *Red Crosses*.

Overall, it was the changes in quilt imagery that intrigued me most about this year's show. It was interesting to review previous catalogs with an analytical approach to categorize them. This year some, but not enough, of the artwork stood above the rest with strong composition, and some with innovation, but there were more than a handful that I thought looked a bit dated. ▼

SAQA active member Kevan Rupp Lunney is a mom, creator, teacher, and curator who believes that the purpose of life is to share your gifts with the world. She lives in the 'burbs of New Jersey. Her artwork is viewable at www.fiberrevolution.com.

Living up to the digital deal

by Deidre Adams

I would like to commend Inge Mardal and Steen Hougs for their entertaining and informative article, “The digital deal” (Summer 2007 *SAQA Journal*). As they say, it’s great news for artists that so many show organizers are now willing to accept digital submissions. But even more important, from my perspective, is the other side of the digital deal — the responsibility of the artist.

As the designer for the *SAQA Journal* and several SAQA exhibition catalogs, I’ve now had the opportunity to see firsthand a wide range of quilt photographs submitted by artists for publication. Many of these are acceptable and some are even outstanding in terms of quality, but far more often, they aren’t. A photo that gets you juried into a show is not necessarily acceptable for high-quality commercial offset printing.

As SAQA members, we are very fortunate that SAQA has been able to find it within budget to cover the cost of 4-color printing of exhibition catalogs. SAQA PAM members also have the chance to show off a large-size image of their work in the *Portfolio* books. These printed publications give members the opportunity to have their work seen by museums, galleries, art consultants, and other potential buyers. As artists, then, it’s our responsibility to ourselves and to the other artists in our medium to show our work to the best possible advantage. This means professional photography.

The advent of digital photography has had the effect of giving artists the idea that the photography playing field is now level. Many people who in the past would have been intimidated by the idea of shooting their own slides now won’t hesitate to pick up whatever digital camera they might happen to have and pop off a few photos of their quilts. However, some of the old rules still apply: you

need a good quality camera, proper mounting of your piece, proper lighting, and an understanding of photography. Along with that, you need to be trained in the art of color correction if you are going to be working digitally.

Another reason I advocate professional digital photography is that some people are still having slides shot and scanned. Slides by nature are not as sharp as high-quality, professional digital photographs, regardless of how good that slide may be. The reason is that a slide is a tiny piece of film, only 1 x 1.5 inches, and simply cannot hold very fine detail, especially as the size of the artwork increases. I’ve seen editors of some publications say they’ll only take slides, but I believe the reason for this is that level-playing-field thing — more digital images are being submitted by unskilled photographers.

Some of the artists I’ve talked to resist professional photography because of the cost. But these same people won’t hesitate to spend money on classes and materials, not to mention investing untold hours in making the work. After you spend so much time on making the work the best you possibly can, why then would you scrimp on the photography — your chance to show your work off to the world and prove that you are indeed serious about your art?

If you still insist on doing your own photos, here are a couple of things to keep in mind:

Camera quality — it’s not enough to have a camera that makes big files. It might be tempting to think that more megapixels means a better camera, but that’s only a part of the story. Other important factors are the type of lens, the size and type of the camera’s sensor, the type and amount of compression applied to the image, and so on. A good source for more information on this topic is

www.dpreview.com — go to the *Learn/Glossary* link. But caution is in order: As quilt photographer Gregory Case (www.gregorycase.com) so aptly puts it, “Having a top-of-the-line camera doesn’t make you a photographer any more than having a top-of-the-line Bernina makes you a fiber artist.”

Lighting and color — Professional photographers not only have good cameras, they also invest in lighting systems appropriate to the job. Even if you go to these lengths, you’ll need to make sure your camera is calibrated to your lighting. Your camera may have auto or adjustable white balance features, but unless you’re highly skilled in the art of color correction in Photoshop, chances are good that your color isn’t going to be accurate.

One more thing of note on the color correction topic: I’ve seen discussions in the SAQA forum regarding RAW formats and processing in Photoshop. If you are going to do this, be very careful that you aren’t altering the image to make it look better than the real thing. I’ve seen some digital submission requirements that specify no alterations of any kind; the important thing is that the photo must be an accurate reproduction of the actual work.

Resolution — there have been several articles on this topic in recent issues of the *Journal*, but one thing bears repeating: you should never try to increase the image size using software. If you open your image in Photoshop® or Photoshop Elements®, go to the Image Size dialog box, and see that your photo is only 900 pixels wide while the requirements are asking for 1800 pixels, you may wonder why you can’t simply change that number to 1800 and thus increase the number of pixels by 200%. The reason is that you just can’t add information to an image that isn’t

See “Living up” on page 31

Sandra Woock at GRACE

by Eileen Doughty

As I approached the Greater Reston Arts Center (GRACE), the expansive street-level windows gave me an enticing preview of what was in store at *Sandra Woock and Marco Rando: Solo Focus Exhibition*. Upon entry to the gallery, my first direct view of the artwork literally made me stop and gasp in delight.

The curator, Joanne Bauer, GRACE's exhibitions director, wisely paired two disparate art forms that surprisingly had much in common. On display were 19 textile and mixed-media pieces from Sandra Woock, 8 wood and metal sculptures from Marco Rando, and one collaborative piece. The two bodies of artwork were very strong individually, yet they also played off each other. What a dynamic duo! The curator stated that both artists came from a fine craft tradition and, coincidentally, both had studied textiles. At-home parenthood influenced both artists' modes of creativity and induced both to appreciate the preciousness of time.

Woock creates textile and mixed-media artwork with various surface design techniques, often embellishing the cloth with copper. Rando sculpts wood and incorporates found objects; for this exhibit, all his pieces were kinetic, with wheeled chassis. For both artists, the exhibition compared hard and soft, lines and curves, multi-hued and monochromatic palettes, statement and metaphor.

The curator thoughtfully placed the artwork to allow visual flow and interaction. This is the first time GRACE removed all the interior gallery walls, turning several into pedestals for Marco's pieces. The openness allowed the energy from the powerful artwork to fill a large space without feeling claustrophobic.

This review will focus primarily on



Woock's artwork. I had seen some of Woock's textile artwork before, including *Pipedreams* in *Quilt National '05*. This exhibition proved her mastery of her distinctive style, with more sophisticated choices of color and virtuoso brushwork. Her newer compositions have less of a precisely-drawn schematic look and are more gestural, spontaneous, and organic. All of Woock's pieces begin with solid black fabric upon which she uses various resists and discharge techniques and paints with dyes. Some pieces have a traditional rectangular format; others are vertically oriented with straight sides but irregular tops and bottoms. About half of the pieces incorporate copper in sheet or wire form. Woock works copper with surface design techniques — shaping, cutting, hammering and applying finishes. She chooses copper in order to provide a dichotomy with the black textile surface and to see how extreme she can get in her mixed-media work.

In her statement, Woock says, "For me, the joy of being an artist is the dialogue that opens between me and the viewer. It is my hope that the impressionistic images I create spark the viewer's imagination while allowing freedom to rely on his or her own experiences to personalize an interpretation." The abstract compositions certainly support her statement; however, some of the titles are more successfully enigmatic, inviting more exploration of the artwork.

Elements Series #1: Conception, for example, was readily interpreted from the title. Whirling splashes of color,

surrounded by text and interrupted by geometric shapes, depict the mental state of the artist starting a new piece: energy and excitement, brainstorming, ideas just starting to take shape, form imposing itself on chaos.

Cosmic Matters #2 seemed to reference a telescopic image of a galaxy. Small pieces of shiny fabric and a webbed motif accented, but didn't overwhelm, the focal point. Wave shapes along the bottom provided a counterpoint to the dominating circular swirls. Black areas and potato-dextrin resist patterns balanced the rest of the energetic composition.

Cosmic Matters #3 was somewhat less successful. My eye moved down a strong diagonal to the circular focal point and then down another lobe of cosmic matter and out through the corner. The radial design was relatively static. It had cooler but more complex colors than did #2.

Bang had the best title, providing the viewer just a hint of explanation, since the word has several connotations. I interpreted it not as a gunshot but as a door slamming. Copper functioned almost as a hinge and accented the discharged patterns; there was very little other color. The lower left area was static, a pattern repeated with little variation — a busy but calm status quo. The central pleated area implied a quick action — a swinging door portrayed like stop-action photography. Past the pleats on the right was the largest black expanse of any piece in the exhibition, symbolizing emptiness and stillness, but also a sense of wholeness after some startling event. Peering

Right: **Bang**, 76" x 38", © 2007

Far right: **Circle Narrative: Interiors**, 57" x 23", © 2007

All photos by Nicholas Bauer

closer between the pleats, I found mysterious small bits of color, providing clues as to what made that door slam.

Only two of Woock's compositions were completely black and white. They gave some respite from the explosive color in her other pieces. They were also among the older pieces, completed in 2003 and 2004. Hung near each other, they invited comparisons. *Retrofit: Spin Out* was the better composition of the two, with receding and advancing planes I never tired of studying. The variety of lines — straight and circular, all of varying thicknesses — kept the eye moving and discovering. Quilting stitches were only on the edges of lines and shapes, and were kept subtle in order to avoid fighting the multitude of linear elements. *Edgy* was more jarring; the lines and planes were chaotic without any flow.

Nearby was the only collaborative piece, *La Garra* (which I translated as "The Claw"). Like Rando's other pieces, it had a kinetic aspect resulting from the wheeled base, resembling a surreal baby stroller. The raw-edge cloth canopy — black and white striped fabric — was obviously Woock's contribution and echoed Rando's wooden slats positioned around the "seat." I loved the humor of the metal "Push" garbage can lid on the back of the seat. Closer inspection revealed surprises of tiny areas of color, of small circles amidst all the lines.

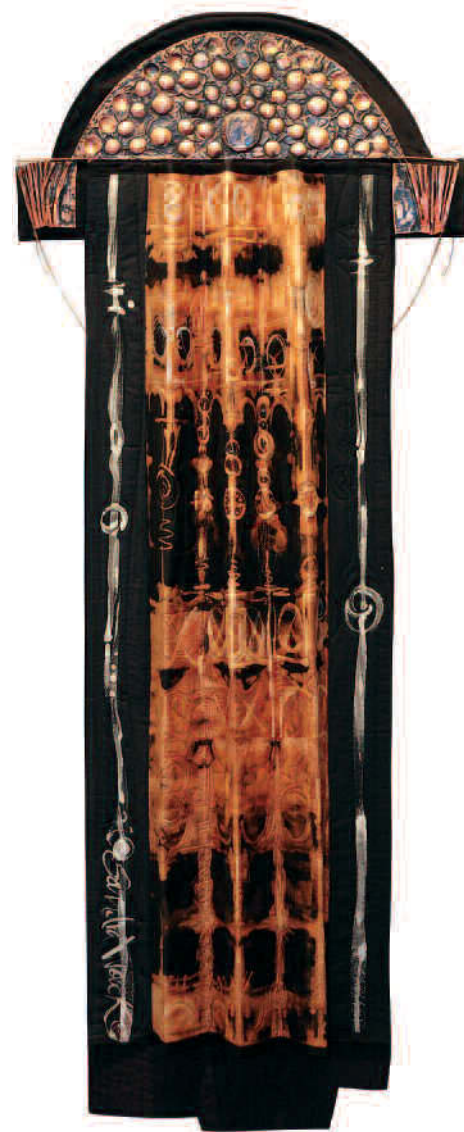
Circle Narrative: Interiors was more introspective and an excellent example of Woock's use of the medium in three dimensions. The central area portrayed dreamlike discharge shapes; the left and right sides were discharged with rope-like lines and knotted circles. Two small square areas held copper folded in accordion pleats, like stage curtains opening.



The lunette at the top was copper with chasing and repoussé circles; relatively fragile copper wires below completed the circle.

The five pieces from the *Attribute* series suffered from being placed in various parts of the room, and some seemed crowded in narrow spaces between windows. The relative smallness of the pieces created a compositional challenge, one not completely met by Woock. I found the copper embellishments more interesting than the textile part of the designs.

Ice Cube was Woock's only non-wall piece, suspended on a single wire that allowed it to rotate. It was a hexahedron, or elongated cube. Painted squares covered the four long sides, each square a unique design referencing things related to ice cubes: cups, droplets, sloshing liquids, a bucket with a handle. Some squares on each side were cut out and scrim placed in the openings — perhaps referencing



bubbles rising through a liquid. The painted squares were neatly aligned in grids, making me thirsty for a pile of ice in a tall glass.

Woock successfully takes advantage of the textile medium, exploring beyond the more usual kind of art quilt that could just as well be an oil painting on stretched canvas. It was a treat to see her 3-dimensional pieces and well-integrated incorporation of metal. I look forward to seeing what her artistic evolution brings next. ▼

SAQA professional member Eileen Doughty makes landscape quilts in her studio in Vienna, Virginia. In addition, she writes and lectures about art quilts. She is also SAQA's web site coordinator. Her web site is www.doughtydesigns.com.

Reaching Antarctica, a step at a time

by Claire Plug

In October of 2006, I travelled to Antarctica for two weeks on a Fellowship under the New Zealand Antarctic Artists and Writers program. This is the story of how I got there.

Antarctica has always fascinated me. New Zealand has very strong links both to Antarctica's history and to the current research going on there. I have a science degree, so I follow the developments with interest.

I've been making quilts since the early 70s. I mainly use discharge techniques for my fabrics. The quilts are then assembled by machine.

I first began thinking seriously about applying for the fellowship in 2002 when I entered a national Antarctica-themed quilt challenge sponsored by Antarctica New Zealand, and I won!

Spurred on, I began reading more to see whether in this new landscape there might be something for me from a creative point of view.

Challenges posed by the application process

The fellowship has been going for 10 years. It is jointly sponsored by

Antarctica New Zealand and Creative New Zealand, our national arts funding agency. Their goal is to increase public awareness of the importance of Antarctica and of the relationship between arts and science. All visual, written, and performing arts media are eligible. There is a similar program in the U.S.

The application was extensive. I needed to be able to demonstrate considerable background knowledge in my proposal, with letters of support, biographical details, images, and catalogs.

Previous recipients have all been very high-profile artists from a wide range of media, including a fashion designer.

In early 2005, I finally felt ready and applied for that following summer. It was a big task. I kept reminding myself that being a quiltmaker is excellent training. We learn the benefit of dividing big projects into smaller units so they don't overwhelm us.

Several months later, I heard that my application was unsuccessful. After a fortnight of licking my

wounds, I phoned the applications coordinator just to talk about the process. She was tremendously encouraging and suggested I give it another go.

I realised that I couldn't hide behind that lame old excuse, that "textiles are the poor relation and don't stand a chance at this sort of thing." From how she spoke, I knew this wasn't the case here. I just had to do a better job!

I decided to reapply for the following season and continued to read and dream of things icy. As the deadline neared, I took up her offer of giving me some feedback on my application. I nervously emailed it off.

In her reply she pulled no punches. "Yes it looks good, but here are some additional comments you may wish to consider. You need to tell us the overwhelming reason why you need to go beyond just 'visual inspiration'; everyone says that. You could just go to visit a south island glacier for that. You need to make yours stand out ... be more assertive and definite ... give more detail ... how will you make links between your research and your

Base flag (view from New Zealand's Scott Base kitchen)



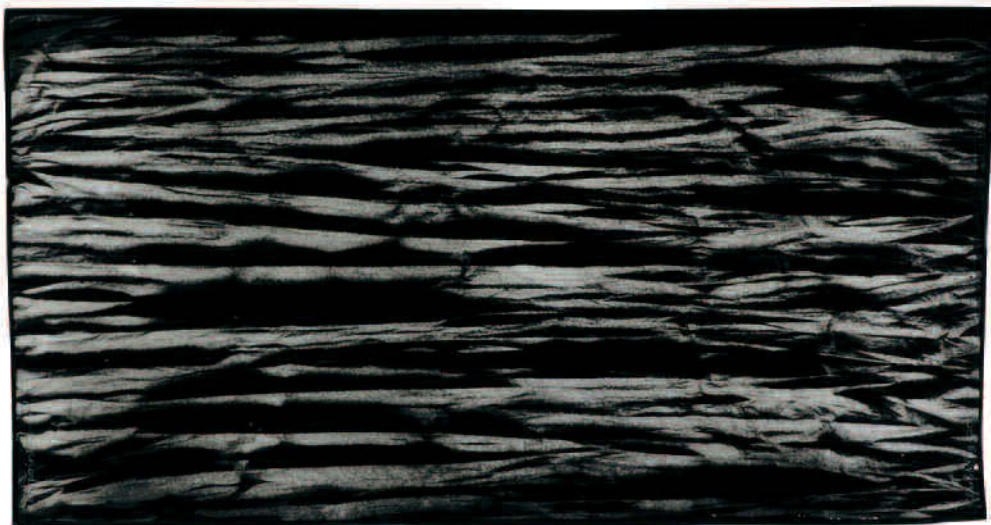
Textiles remaining in Scott's Discovery Hut





Left: Nun Look, (my co-traveller's name for me all trussed up)

Below: Viewpoint 2, © 2002. Whole cloth, discharge dyed, machine quilted. Winner of Antarctic Challenge, New Zealand National Quilt Symposium, 2003.



medium? Finally, spell out exactly how you think the whole experience would stretch you artistically in terms of trying new things, pushing the envelope further."

I felt shattered; I just couldn't see *how* I could improve it. But the more I thought about what she had written, the more I realised she had given me a tremendous and rare gift: honest, constructive feedback.

With my husband's help, I revisited my application section by section. Even if I didn't get accepted now, I had certainly learned a lot about making applications for the future!

My proposal

My chosen theme was "Layers of Protection." Antarctica seems to me to be a "time capsule," an "ark," and an "early warning station" all in one, and I hoped to convey various aspects of this, along with the history and the science, in my artwork.

While I couldn't predict the actual appearance of the artwork that would come from my time in Antarctica, I tried to show I had thought through a plan and had a framework for the exhibition. I sent off my new bolder, hopefully stronger, application. Several months later the letter came back. It was YES! I was going the following summer!

How I prepared

Right from the start in 2002, I felt I really needed to be up to speed, so I read, watched videos, and went to lectures and exhibitions by other artists who had been there. I read

blogs from people stationed at the various bases, spoke with people who had visited or worked there, and read scientific and newspaper reports. I just lived Antarctica for several years.

When I knew I was going, I reread lots of the books again. I admit I was a bit nervous about how I'd cope in the cold; we don't have hard winters here where I live. I knew I was in for a physical trip and I am not an especially sporty person. I didn't want to let down the two other artists I would travel with and spoil their adventure.

I lost weight and got fitter. I would need it immediately for the compulsory field training course consisting of climbing up ice slopes, learning to stop ourselves sliding if we fell, putting up tents to camp overnight, making ice shelters, and using all the survival gear for all our travels out from the base.

Antarctica New Zealand would lend me all the clothing I needed, and their staff also helped with advice about how to use cameras in such conditions. I bought my first digital camera and packed my two film cameras as backup, along with binoculars and my new little digital sound recorder. My husband would later use the recordings I made as part of an electro-acoustic soundscape that will play during my exhibition. My art supplies were very simple: a notebook, some fabrics, hoop and threads

for hand stitchery, basic fabric paints, and a box of water-soluble crayons

This is a high-profile Fellowship in New Zealand, a huge step up from anything I had tackled before. Had I overcommitted myself? What if I came home totally overwhelmed by the whole experience and had a huge creative block? What if the whole two weeks were spent confined to base in a blizzard?

I couldn't panic; it was too late for that. But I needed to develop a backup plan. My reading had given me some ideas. I gathered together notes on some possible approaches to use if needed:

- Personal maps or picture diaries telling the story of my 14 days on the ice; or
- "What if a woman, a compulsive stitcher, had gone south with early explorers 100 years ago? What might she sew during the long winter?"

This seemed like a good idea if I found myself confined to base for days on end in a storm, as was quite possible.

I liked the silk sledging banners in a famous photo of Captain Scott's birthday party there. I found out more about them from a polar historian. Sheer fabrics could convey the bright light, reflections, fragility, and

See "Antarctica" on page 29

Meet your regional representatives

Anna Hergert

Canada Co-Representative



Fabrics and threads have played an important role in my life since early childhood while growing up in southern Bavaria.

Immigrating to Canada in 1979 opened up many new opportunities in the fiber arts field, and I opened a yarn shop in Calgary where I offered classes in knitting, spinning, weaving, and dyeing. My fascination with fabrics and threads came full circle when I was able to complete diplomas through London City & Guilds in art and design with an emphasis on embroidery, patchwork, and quilting. I am passionate about combining the

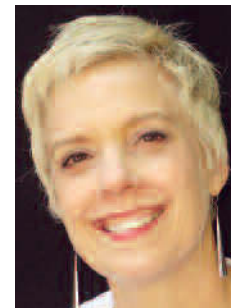
unexpected with conventional techniques. My primary goal is to bring an element of surprise to each piece to capture the viewer's attention. To encourage further investigation of my artwork, I strive to incorporate multiple layers of fabric and stitch. The result quite often is three dimensional wall art.

Much of my recent artwork has grown out of a study of Friedensreich Hundertwasser, the late Austrian artist/architect, and his lifelong attempt to abolish straight lines, which "lead to the downfall of humanity." I have recognized how much my past was influenced by perfect geometric shapes and lines. This has led me to successfully combine the personal effort not to "color outside the picture" with Hundertwasser's free-thinking philosophy by creating pieces that connect color, undulating lines, and dimensionality, resulting in one-of-a-kind pieces.

As a fairly new PAM, I felt honored to be invited by Laurie Swim and Karen Goetzinger to become a co-rep. My main objectives as the western Canadian rep are to actively recruit new members to strengthen our representation, continue the dialogue between members and reps for the western region, and seek out new exhibition opportunities for the Canadian membership.

Karen Goetzinger

Canada Co-Representative



Textiles have always been a part of my creative life, beginning at the age of 11 when I learned to sew with my mother's committed guid-

ance, using skills passed on by my grandmother, an accomplished traditional hand quilter. I continued with



Utopia – Changing our Carbon Footprint one Tree at a Time

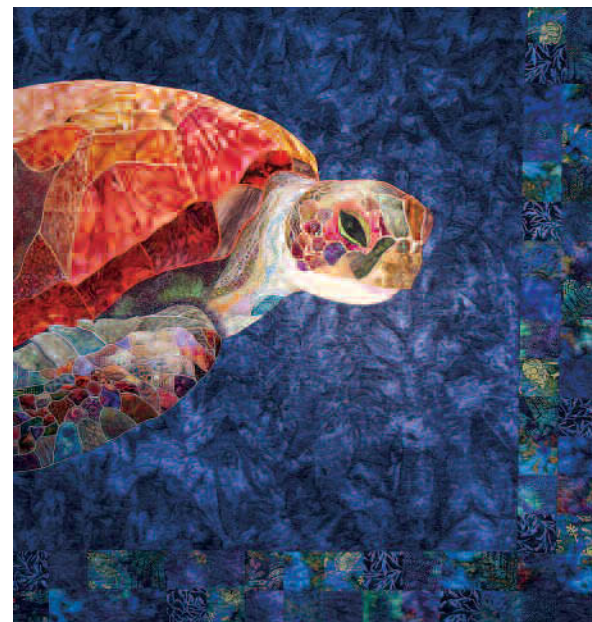
60" x 36" x 1.5"

© 2006 Anna Hergert



Left: **City on a Hill**, 36" x 12", © Karen Goetzinger

Below: **Honu**, 45" x 45", © 2006 Dianna Grundhauser



formal study and received a bachelor of arts in fashion design. However, it wasn't until 1999 that I realized I could combine those couture skills and my art and design background with the love for quilting that my grandmother and mother had given me. This discovery, and eight moves within an eight-year period of time, led me to take the leap to be a full-time studio artist.

I had been a PAM for less than a year when Martha Sielman and Laurie Swim asked me if I would be interested in being a co-rep for Canada. I heartily agreed to take on the task, since I firmly believe that being an active member of an organization means just that — actively contributing to the greater good of it. Thank you for this superb opportunity to learn more about SAQA and to get to know the artists behind the amazing work being shown throughout North America and the world.

Dianna Grundhauser

Hawaii Representative



As a child, I spent a lot of time with my maternal grandmother, who kept me busy with various arts and crafts. I loved to sit and play with her baskets of scraps, which is probably where my love for fabric and color began. It stayed dormant until my early 20s, when my mom gave me one of the family quilts, a scrappy grandmother's fan made around 1940. After one beginner's class, I was hooked. My journey has taken me from eager traditional student to quilt shop owner, designer, long-arm quilter, and now to contemporary quilt artist.

My island home provides daily

inspiration, and its imagery and vibrant color regularly finds its way into my artwork. I use a variety of construction methods for my quilts but mostly enjoy elaborate piecing and appliqué to achieve a stylized version of my subjects, which include the flowers, landscapes, and sea life of Hawaii. My web site is www.quiltingspirit.com.

I am excited about the newly formed Hawaii region and hope to pull together and increase the existing SAQA membership to form a more connected state-wide group. I also want to gain more exposure for art quilts as a medium through various island and statewide exhibits and presentations.

Marie Johansen

Oregon/Washington Co-Representative



My obsession with quilts and textiles began in 1971 with a visit to an Amish quilt exhibition at the Whitney Museum in New York City. It tuned out to be a pivotal experience for me. After seeing those quilts, I gave up weaving and spinning and began to amass a stash of fabric. I started by making relatively crude Amish knock-offs that I began selling in 1975. I soon learned that I had a very difficult time pricing and promoting myself, so I stopped making quilts for sale. Textiles and art went on a brief hiatus while I attempted to climb the proverbial career ladder in the very male-dominated, left-brained field of aviation.

After some years, however, I realized that I needed textile arts in my life more than the money that a career brought. The more I made traditional quilts, which I still truly love



Van Gogh's Night
14" x 10", © Marie Johansen

and appreciate, the more I realized that I wanted to stretch my boundaries and explore new methods with textiles and other media. I still work a part-time day job, but my explorations are going deeper into art quilts. I enjoy making commissioned traditional quilts; the need for warmth and comfort that quilts provide continues to be a strong motivator for me. I do believe, however, that quilting and patchwork have a long tradition of appreciation as an art form that must continue to be fostered as well as honored by groups such as the Studio Art Quilt Associates. I am very proud to be a member of this group and even more honored to be a regional representative. My goal is to motivate more people to explore the medium to its fullest extent while continuing to promote the recognition of art quilting as a fine art.

Blogging

from page 13

did not have the funds available to invest in a really good web site. Blogging seemed to be a viable option that would help me prepare for the creation of my own web site. I've since launched my new web site, <http://pat-dolan.com>.

6. Is there any cost involved?

There is no financial cost involved in starting or maintaining a blog. The major investment is time. Yet the time required to write in my art journal is always well spent. Sometimes I'm rather reflective in my entries. Other times I want to share something with the readers. I've done several different tutorials as a result of questions in the comment section of the blog. Sometimes my writings are inspired by my love of nature and photography. At any given time, photos of flowers, birds, and anything else that has caught my eye will appear in my journal entries.

7. What opportunities has your blog brought you?

My blog has attracted several opportunities, including small sales, speaking engagements, and exhibit invitations. The tutorials mentioned above brought me a request from Sherry Best of the Sabatini Gallery of Topeka, Kansas, to create and publish a CD with two separate tutorials involving the techniques used in two of my quilts in their Kansas Art Quilter's *Covers Blown!* exhibition this past June. Sherry wanted the gallery docents to be able to answer questions from the viewers and to have something on hand to show the process.


One way to attract non-web ring users is by applying labels to each blog entry. These labels are catchwords to attract viewers who might be specifically interested in a particular entry. For instance, I recently posted about a challenge piece that I was creating. The labels I entered included "challenge quilt," "fiber

art," "art quilt," "rusted fabrics," and "stamping on fabric." While these particular labels won't attract many buyers for my artwork, they will invite other artists with similar interests as well as gallery owners and curators to see my artwork.

8. Do you read other blogs?

Absolutely! Each evening, I take time to look at all the new entries in the blogs I subscribe to, plus do some random web-ring reading. It's a stimulating yet relaxing time where I can see what other artists are doing with their fibers, paints, etc. and be inspired to try a new approach, technique, or color scheme based upon this cross section of artists sharing with one another. I enjoy ending my day with an exploration of the art and writings of others in my field. ▼

SAQA active member Patricia C. Dolan is a fiber artist from Manalapan, New Jersey. Her blog is <http://patsartjournal.blogspot.com>



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SAQA Artists Web Ring

SAQA now has a web ring. Here's how to join:

Go to the SAQA Information page and select *Member's Blogs*; it will take you to a new page. Select *Information about the Web Ring*; it will take you to Ringsurf. Fill in the following boxes with this information:

Site Title: Title of your blog

Site Owner: Your name

Email address: Your email address

Site url: the url of your blog; if your blog is part of your web page, be sure that this link goes directly to your blog, not the home page. *Please* be accurate in entering the URL.

Ring code UTL: skip this

Year of Birth: you must enter this information, sorry about that

Password: enter and verify

Keywords: search words that you want to pertain to your site

Site Description: short description; this will appear on the List page

Verification code: 4 nearly unreadable digits on a black background. Enter these digits.

Click *Add your site to the Ring*.

Next, you'll see the page with the html code that must be inserted onto your blog. Select and copy all of the text. Go to your blog page, edit layout and insert it.

Antarctica

from page 25

brittleness, the “layers” of my proposal.

I travelled to Christchurch two days before I was to fly south. Here there is a whole wing in the Museum devoted to the continent, along with Scott’s marble statue carved by his widow, and an Antarctic Centre to visit. I had this final immersion before leaving on my big adventure.

The trip

This was not a tourist trip! We flew south at the beginning of the 2006/7 Antarctic season, in a huge USAF C17 Globemaster. It was a 5½ hour flight to the ice runway near the U.S. McMurdo Station and Scott Base.

The temperature was -28°C (-18.5°F) with any wind adding a severe wind chill. Scott Base is New Zealand’s scientific research station with support staff and accommodation for up to 120 people. It is organized much like a hostel, but with superb food!

After our 2½ day survival training course, we explored the base environs, were taken out on day trips, visited scientists, and camped out with a team studying the sea ice. We visited three historic huts from the early explorers and had a helicopter day trip into the mountains and the Dry Valleys area to the southeast.

It wasn’t possible for me to make fabric down there. But I took hundreds of photos, made notes, stitched fragments, and researched in the base library. I had the most magical time! It was a surprisingly “textiley” place with all the flags, old and new clothing, tents, etc. Textiles play a vital role in human survival there.

What next?

Back home to reality and to my part-time day job, it felt like a hard landing for a while. Eventually, I understood my Antarctic experience is an ongoing one, with the trip just a small part.

I can continue to live it in my artwork, and that doesn’t need to stop with just one show. I continue with my reading, following the ongoing research, my new friends, and in my

writing and giving lectures. In June, I gave a lecture at the Surface Design Association *Mind + Body* conference in Kansas City, Missouri. In July, I attended the annual Antarctica conference in Wellington, New Zealand, and heard updates on the research.

I’ve been making samples of discharge fabrics for the quilts, so far a mix of things I’ve tried before or variations, and some completely new. Not all are successful; some definitely need still more work and refinement. I have tried various resists and some overdyeing, and I still want to play with a number of other techniques.

So far my actual sewing has been mainly playing with sheers on samples that still look very raw as I work to solve technical, compositional, and design problems. I think they may become a series of banners to hang with the quilts.

In the past few years there has been increasing awareness about climate change and global warming. This is what most of the science going on there is concerned with. I feel the theme of my artwork will come to be more about this than what I now feel is the rather simplistic “Layers of Protection” I originally proposed. But it’s allowed to morph from my original proposal, and the artwork will tell me the way to go.

I now have a solid year’s work ahead of me as I build my exhibition. So far I’ve been hovering around the edges, but now the concept is starting to come together, to clarify in my mind.

Next I need to finish some of the individual works, and then I can start talking more formally with my local museum about showing there and my hope to tour to some other New Zealand venues.

I just keep remembering my favourite Chinese proverb, “A journey of 1000 miles begins with a single step.” ▼

SAQA active member Clare Plug lives in Napier, New Zealand.

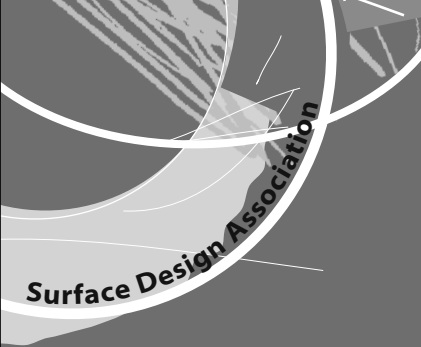
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Time Management

from page 9

Given the drive to complete individual art or begin new creative explorations within the time available, spending time on writing seems to be a personal choice, but numerous avenues are open if one has an interest.

Workshops and lectures

In addition to the creation and sale of their own art, teaching art workshops and giving professional lectures to private groups or as part of a larger art-related event are two of the most common activities for artists. They are advantageous to some since they provide income and promotional opportunities as well as a way to participate in educating other creative people. Thirteen of the eighteen artists wrote that they normally spend significant time preparing or teaching workshops. Managing the investment of time required becomes an issue when new workshop content

must be planned or the artist must travel. The frequency and length of workshop-related activity varies, as does workshop content and complexity. Some artists may spend 12 hours total preparing for a workshop trip. Some spend 10-12 hours every week planning or teaching. Several artists mentioned teaching workshops 1-4 times a year, perhaps spending 2-5 days on each. **Deana Hartman** teaches 20 workshops a year.

Other supplemental activities

In addition to making their art pieces and, for some, teaching and lecturing, artists occasionally set aside time to pursue other activities that generate income. Four artists reported that they had created booklets, project patterns, cards, or other production items for sale. Others sell books and/or class supplies. Several artists have done work as a juror or curator. Opportunities to volunteer with an

art organization are plentiful. **Kim Ritter** spends about 20 hours a week working for *Fine Focus*, volunteering for Studio Art Quilt Associates, International Quilt Association, and her local arts group. **Linda Gass** has devoted time to numerous volunteer positions: "I am the southwest regional rep for the Surface Design Association. I am on the board of the Textile Arts Council of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, and I am on the advisory board of the Black Rock Arts Foundation. I served on the board of the San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles from 2001-2003, and I am still involved with various projects at the museum. I spend an average of 5-10 hours per week doing work for these organizations." ▼

SAQA Active Member Elizabeth Van Schaick is a freelance writer and art quilt, fabric, jewelry, and paper-collage maker. She lives near Philadelphia.

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there to begin with. If you increase your image by 200%, you are turning 1 pixel into 4 (doubling in both dimensions, so it's now 2x2). The software has to interpolate, or make up, those extra pixels. This results in an image that looks "soft" (blurry), and/or has obvious "jaggies" — a stair-stepped appearance visible on curves and diagonal lines. The best way to ensure a good quality image is to shoot it with high resolution to begin with.

Quilts and other fiber artworks aren't paintings — they have soft, sensuous edges. When preparing images for publication in the *SAQA Journal*, an exhibition catalog, or a high-end magazine, don't chop off the edges. This looks especially bad if your quilt has a border or binding that's unevenly cropped. Professional publications will have the capability of dropping out the background in a way that doesn't compromise the edges.

Publishing blurry, improperly exposed, or oddly cropped photos is self-defeating for an organization whose mission is to promote the art of the quilt. So, if you're talented and fortunate enough to be juried into a show with a printed exhibition catalog, please don't be offended if you're asked to provide a better image of your quilt. It's up to all of us to provide imagery that maintains the highest possible standards for our publications. As Mardal and Hougs maintain, "organizers do not ask for more than you should ask of yourself." ▼

SAQA Journal designer Deidre Adams is a Colorado artist whose work can be seen at deidreadams.com.

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To find out more about SAQA, call Martha Sielman, executive director, (860) 487-4199; msielman@sbcglobal.net; or visit our web site at www.saqa.com. Annual membership: Active (US and international) \$50, professional artist members \$115; student (full-time, with copy of ID) \$25.

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

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