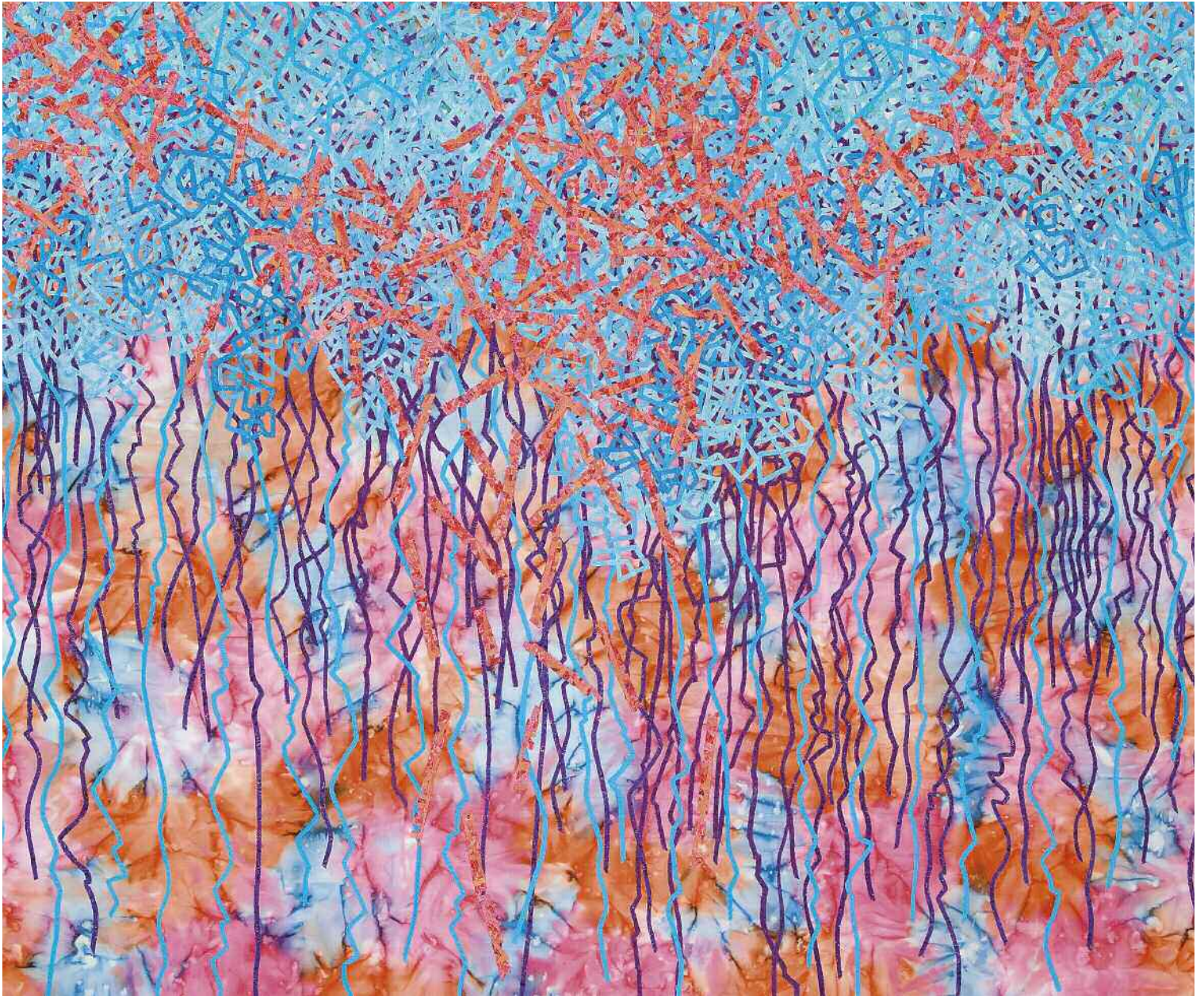


SAQA *Journal*

Studio Art Quilt Associates, Inc. ▲▲▲ Volume 18, No. 1 ▲▲▲ Winter 2008



Echoes of Past Encounters

by Eileen Lauterborn

see page 27

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Thoughts from the SAQA president

by Judith Content



As a native New Englander, I find autumn in Northern California elusive to say the least. No, we don't have the blaze of color I remember from my youth, and yet ... as

I write my winter *SAQA Journal* column, the Japanese maples in my backyard are showing signs of pink and red, the days are getting shorter, and I am experiencing a familiar feeling. For me, fall is the time to try something new, to make a change, to start fresh.

Growing up in Massachusetts, my sister and I spent the summers with our mother in a cabin near Lake Winnepesaukee, New Hampshire. On the weekends, my dad would drive up, and if I was lucky (and I often was) he would take me rock hound-

ing. My mom and sister would bring their books, and he and I would take our hammers and shovels and head off to the mine tailings in Vermont, the streambeds of Maine, or the highway road cuts all over New England. We always found treasure: colorful crystals of quartz, amethyst and tourmaline, sheets of mica, and surreal agate geodes.

A born collector, I eventually filled my tiny bedroom in Westwood, Mass. with rocks. Occasionally my dad would visit me in my quarry and say, "Judy, you don't have to show them *all at once*. Edit; focus on a theme ... amethyst today, agate tomorrow?" I was doubtful, but I have since learned that a trick to displaying collections is in the arrangement. Combine by color, array by size, isolate unique pieces and create intriguing combinations. Contrast colors and textures, effectively illuminate, and remember to dust.

Today I have more collections than I care to count. And they are almost all on display. A rainbow of antique pastry blenders climbs the front of a narrow closet door. Whisk brooms hang from driftwood pegs pounded into a weathered board. Spools of red thread accumulate in a lacquer basket and colorful Oaxacan animals sit on glossy black shelves. Artists' postcards multiply on my office wall, in company with textiles from around the world.

And now *Mardi Gras Lace*, by Desiree Vaughn, hangs in a small blue niche in my front hall. This is my first art quilt, purchased during the wonderful SAQA online auction. It's a treasure lacking companionship however, at least until the next SAQA auction. All things considered, I think that this just might be the start of a beautiful collection. It's fall, after all — the ideal time to start something new!

From the editor

by Carolyn Lee Vehslage, www.clvquilts.com



The winter issue is filled with information that is pertinent to us as artists. Lawyer and CPA Richard A. Buggy provides us with useful advice on

how to handle our art business in terms of IRS taxes. Lawyers George Gottlieb and Marc P. Misthal explain the details of SAQA member Paula Nadelstern's copyright case against the Hilton Hotel in Houston for their use of her kaleidoscopic quilt designs without her permission.

SAQA member Margaret Cusack shares her extensive experience with commissions. SAQA member BJ Parady explains how she sells her quilts on Etsy. SAQA board member Lisa Chipetine discusses the newly established SAQA University that is a repository of information we can all benefit from.

Our feature artist this issue is Karin Franzen from Fairbanks, Alaska. Even though she's only been creating art quilts for four short years, she's had tremendous success at exhibiting and selling her artwork. We can all learn from her experience. If you know of a SAQA member who is on the verge of

"making it big," please contact me at clvquilts@yahoo.com so we can consider him or her for our Highlighted Artist series.

Congratulations to the 42 SAQA members who were juried into *ArtQuilt Elements*. I hope to meet up with all of you and all the other SAQA members who will be attending the SAQA-SDA conference *Breaking New Ground* during the opening weekend of *AQE*. Please make a point to seek me out and let me know what type of articles you would like to see in future issues of the *Journal*.

Report from the SAQA executive director

by Martha Sielman, www.marthasielman.com



I wanted to write this issue's column about books. I'm very excited because yesterday I received the galley proof for the *Masters: Art Quilt* book

being published by Lark Books, for which I am the curator. My husband asked me why I'm a curator for this book and not its author, but the process that I went through is more closely akin to curating an exhibition than to writing a novel. Lark had a very specific formula that they asked me to follow. I nominated 50 artists (from my initial wish list of over 200). This was far and away the most difficult part of the entire project; all of the 200+ artists on my initial list are masters and would have made for an excellent book, but because Lark wanted to show an in-depth look at each artist's artwork, including 10 quilts by each, only 40 could be included. Lark invited the 50 artists on my list to submit images, a full-page artist statement, and résumé information. After review, they chose 40 artists for inclusion, based partially on artistic merit, partially on the quality of the images submitted and how well they would translate into print, and partially on the publisher's desire to have a book that included artists from many different countries because the book will be co-published in Canada, the U.K., and Australia.

I then wrote a short introductory essay (it had to be only 150-200 words) for each artist and indicated which pieces I would like to see included. Sometimes this involved asking the artist for additional images of artwork that I had seen but which had not been sent in the initial port-

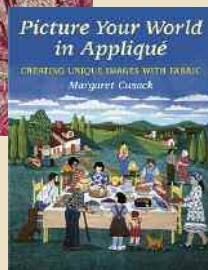
folio. Writing those brief introductions was a fascinating process. I read through the artist statements that had been submitted and then looked at as much artwork as I could find. I read as much as I could about the artist, particularly about the artist's inspiration. I looked at web sites, catalogs, books, and interviews. I immersed myself as fully as I could in the artist's work without actually visiting the artist's studio (though if the budget had allowed...). Then I tried to convey what I had learned in less than 200 words.

Writing one essay was difficult — exhilarating but difficult. It's sometimes much easier to write a lot than to write a little. Writing 40 took a long time, much longer than I bargained for when I blithely agreed to do this project for the princely sum of \$1,000 back in January. Then I found out that I needed to write an introduction to the book and an About the Curator statement. Fortunately, I was able to get my husband to do a first draft for that section, since I find writing about myself to be excruciating.

I turned it all in at the end of June. Nathalie Mornu, the editor for the book, took what I had written and polished it. Lark's art department

took my suggestions for artwork and made their own choices, sometimes following my suggestions, sometimes not, and adding many detail shots. And then when a sample draft was shown to the publisher, they decided that the quilts looked far too packed on the page, and they added 84 additional pages to the book! This is practically unheard of. The book is now some 415 pages, and judging by what I can tell from a black-and-white photocopy version, it will be gorgeous. It is scheduled to be printed in May 2008.

Going through this process makes me even more appreciative of the work that each of the authors in our membership has done to create their books, and I'm glad that we are able to help support their efforts by carrying their books for sale on the SAQA web site. If you haven't already done so, please take a look at the SAQA Store tab on the web site. SAQA publications, such as the new *Portfolio 14* book and the double catalog for *Creative Force 07/A Sense of Place*, are available for sale there. We carry a full list of books by SAQA members, as well as a growing selection of other books that are of general interest. I look forward to being able to include mine among them.



Picture Your World in Appliqué: Creating Unique Images with Fabric, by Margaret Cusack, and *Thread Painting: Simple Techniques to Add Texture and Dimension*, by Leni Levenson Wiener, are two of the many titles by SAQA members now available in the SAQA Store. Go to www.saqa.com and click on the SAQA Store link.

Report from the SAQA board

by Penny McMorris

Thanks to so many of you, we're all still celebrating the success of the auction. It was an amazingly successful fund-raiser! And since many of you have asked how and when you can be involved next time around, we've decided to build on the momentum and plan a second auction to be held beginning November 10, 2008. We have time to publicize, which will be good for the auction and bring more viewers in to see your artwork. If you would like to make a One-Foot Square for SAQA Auction 2008, plan now — the deadline is August 15, 2008. Create a label with your name and the title and send the finished pieces to SAQA, P.O. Box 572, Storrs, CT 06268.

After that second auction, we plan to hold a new auction every other year, so our third auction will take place in 2010. A big thanks to all who generously donated a piece of art, who bid on or purchased one of the small quilts, or who helped with the auction action.

The board is continually striving to make SAQA serve the needs of its members, and with that goal in mind, we have initiated a long-range strategic planning process. Board committees and ad hoc advisory groups have been given assignments focusing on key areas of SAQA's operations. They have been asked to brainstorm on where they would like to see SAQA in one year, in two years and in five years, and what actions will be necessary to reach those goals. The results will be collected during December and January. Nelda Warkentin will collect them together into one document in February. Changes will be made during March, and the board will finalize the plan during its face-to-face meeting on April 4th in Wayne, Pennsylvania.

Speaking of planning future activities, we hope that you'll be attending the *Breaking New Ground* conference, co-sponsored by SAQA and the Surface Design Association (SDA). The symposium, tour, and workshops will be in Wayne, Pennsylvania (close to Philadelphia) from April 5-9, 2008. If you still need information, you'll find a conference brochure and registration form on the SAQA website (look for the left-side link from the home page). This is an exceptional opportunity to hear an exciting mix of speakers, take in gallery tours and workshops, including a visit to the internationally known Fabric Workshop, as well as a chance to see the Fiber Biennial at Snyderman-Works gallery. And don't forget the many chances to network with other artists. Sign up soon — we're already 75% filled, and we want to see you there!

We're also already planning ahead for a mini-conference to be held during *Quilt National '09*, so pencil that in for the end of May 2009. Since so many of you asked for even more networking opportunities, this mini-conference will offer plenty of that plus informative discussions based around *Quilt National* jurying.

Board member Lisa Chipetine really pushed ahead with her idea for making networking and mentoring educational sessions available, even during non-conference times. The result? Her national mentoring conference calls have been a great success. It's a terrific idea that responds directly to your wish to have more ways to share information. Be sure to read the most recent e.Bulletin on the SAQA web site for the call-in number and conference code.

The board welcomes two new board members: Sandra Sider and Peg

Keeney. We look forward to working together. And we give a big thanks to Katie Pasquini Masopust for her excellent (and fun) presidential leadership over the past so many years. As we say goodbye to Katie, we welcome our new president, Judith Content who has been so busy as exhibits committee chairman as well as vice president. Peg Keeney will take over as the head of the exhibits committee.

Over the past year, the exhibits committee has been working hard to promote art quilts. SAQA has had eight exhibits in 2006-7 and another seven are in the works for 2008-09. This would not have been possible without the behind-the-scenes work of our outstanding volunteer curators: Linda Colsh, Martha Bruin Degen, Diane Bielak, Susan Crouse-Kemp, Jeannette DeNicholis Meyer, Sue Dennis, Karen Goetzinger, Cindi Huss, Lynn Krawczyk, Aynex Mercado, Elisabeth Nacenta de la Croix, Kim Ritter, Susan Sanborn North, Laurie Swim and Desi Vaughn. The committee is now looking ahead 2-4 years for venues and exhibit opportunities.

Transformations '07: Reverberations has garnered a lot of attention in England and Australia; congratulations to all the artists who participated. *Creative Force* and the companion exhibit *A Sense of Place* premiered at Festival of Quilts in Houston this fall. Many thanks to Janome for their sponsorship and to Kim Ritter and Peg Keeney for their work as curators.

The exhibits committee continues to update its procedures and forms. A huge thank-you goes to Rose Hughes for all her continuing hard work on this major project. A new subcommittee headed by Gigi Chandler is working to make online digital entries a reality. We hope to have a trial run soon.

Selling your artwork online with Etsy

By BJ Parady

I have an Etsy store. Every time I say that to someone, the reaction is a double take — what's that?

Launched in 2005, Etsy.com is an online marketplace for handmade items and supplies. Tens of thousands of artists maintain storefronts, and five times that many buyers are registered.

Prices range from a couple of dollars to a few hundred. Looking for a Christmas present, I did a search on “sun” and quickly found several unique art pieces that feature the sun. It's like being at an art fair while sitting in your recliner.

To sell art on Etsy, you first have to set up a (free) storefront. You must pick a name to use for your store; mine is “Prairiescapes.” Etsy has a basic template to which you can add a banner (I made mine in Photoshop Elements to a size that they specified), a welcome message, and up to ten shop divisions (mine are “fiber art,” “watercolor,” and “mixed media”). Buyers must also set up an account on Etsy; if you want to buy and sell, the account/store name must be the same.

Each item listing costs 20¢ for four months and contains a description of the item and up to five pictures. If you have duplicates of the same thing (like a print), each one costs 20¢. When the item sells, the artist pays Etsy a 3.5% commission.

Listings also include “tags”— words that buyers might use in searches — and a list of materials used. Most sellers include things like the medium, color, subject, and maybe a descriptive adjective. One of my listings has the tags “art,” “fiber,” “fabric,” “bird,” “whimsy”, and materials “fabric, linen, thread, paint.”

Items are shown very briefly on the home page of Etsy when you first list them and may show up in the Showcase, which is a handpicked list by a member on one theme — it

could be color, a style, or a subject. You can also pay extra to be a featured artist for a period of time.

I use Paypal for the financial transactions. You can charge for shipping (details are listed for buyers before they buy). Because of the low commission compared to the galleries where I display, and the fact that my pieces don't cost much to mail, I offer free shipping within the U.S. but charge actual shipping costs for outside the U.S.

As on eBay, a feedback system provides ratings for both buyers and sellers. Tiny Etsy is a widget you can put on your web site or blog that links to your Etsy store and shows as many of your items as you want. Street Teams are groups of sellers sharing a common interest, location, or medium that work together to promote Etsy.

I started my Etsy store in July 2007. When I had several items listed, I sent out a mass email announcing my store. This resulted in my first sale, which was actually a trade with a fellow artist for a work of similar value. When I wrote about some small pieces I was making on my blog, I added a link to Etsy and listed them there. This resulted in the sale of a piece to someone who read my blog and went to my shop. Since then, the

Etsy store has been rather quiet.

Deb Lacativa had similar experiences. Two items sold in her first week, then nothing afterwards. She tried to keep the store fresh by adding new items and photos but attributes the lack of sales to the rising number of artists on Etsy. So she recently closed her Etsy store and sells directly from her blog (<http://likehotcakes.blogspot.com/>). “A week doesn't go by that someone doesn't stop on my blog shop Hotcakes and make a purchase,” she reports.

Etsy is a great idea in principle — an online marketplace where people can find handmade things that they buy directly from the person who made them. But it may have expanded too much — it's hard to get your piece to stand out from all the others. On the other hand, it's fairly cheap to use —my first sale has more than covered all of my expenses to date. And I think linking my store to my blog is a good thing. An Etsy store is another way to get your name out there and to have a place to market small pieces. After all, they won't sell sitting in your closet. ▼

SAQA professional artist member BJ Parady lives in Illinois. Her web site is www.bjparady.com and her Etsy store is www.prairiescapes.etsy.com.



Lotus Pod
9.5" x 9.5"

One of BJ's fiber collages available from her Etsy store at www.prairiescapes.etsy.com

Settlement reached in Nadelstern copyright case

By George Gottlieb, Esq. and Marc P. Misthal, Esq.

Paula Nadelstern is a well-known art quilter who has written books on making kaleidoscopic quilts. One of those books, entitled *Kaleidoscopes & Quilts*, featured images of Paula's quilts and instructions on how to make kaleidoscopic quilts. *Kaleidoscopes & Quilts* was published by C & T publishing, and the publisher registered Paula's copyright in the book with the Copyright Office in her behalf. Thirteen of the kaleidoscopic designs featured in the book were copied and appeared in carpeting installed in the Hilton Americas-Houston hotel in Houston.

Paula regularly attends the International Quilt Market and Festival, held annually in Houston, Texas, at the Houston Convention Center. The Convention Center is connected to the Hilton Americas-Houston hotel by a skybridge. During the 2004 Quilt Market, people who had seen the carpeting at the hotel congratulated her on having her quilt designs reproduced in the rugs at the hotel. Paula was puzzled, but when she went to see the carpeting in the Hilton Americas-Houston hotel, she realized that her kaleidoscopic designs had been copied without her permission.

Under the U.S. Copyright Act, Paula's designs were automatically protected by copyright as soon as she created them. The registration of Paula's rights in her book also served to register her rights in her kaleidoscopic designs (as attorneys, we do not recommend registering copyright rights in this fashion — each work should be registered individually).

In the eyes of the ordinary observer, the kaleidoscopic designs in the carpeting were "substantially similar" to Paula's quilt designs, although they were not necessarily identical to her designs. More specifically, we believed that some thirteen

medallions featured in the carpeting at the hotel were copied from medallions shown in Paula's book. Additionally, the people who congratulated Paula certainly thought that the designs in the carpeting were similar to her designs.

As noted above, not all of the infringing designs in the carpeting were identical to Paula's kaleidoscopic designs; some of the thirteen copied medallions bore more resemblance to Paula's designs than others. The differences between the infringing designs in the carpeting and Paula's designs did not prevent Paula from asserting a claim of infringement, because there is no rule that when a certain amount of changes have been made there can be no infringement (sometimes referred to as the "seven- or "ten-points" rule, referring to the number of changes that supposedly have to be made to avoid infringement). Other portions of the carpeting in the hotel were very different from Paula's designs, and some portions of the hotel's carpeting were plain with no design at all.

Paula first went to another attorney, who told her she had no case. She then found us through an Internet search. Our firm specializes in "intellectual property," that is, copyrights, trademarks, and patents, and we often work with artists whose works have been copied. Since Paula is an individual artist with a small business, she could not afford our regular corporate rates, and therefore we worked out a special arrangement with her.

We met several times with Paula, looked at her kaleidoscopic quilt designs carefully and compared them point-by-point with designs that appeared in the carpeting at the Hilton Americas-Houston hotel. Based on those evaluations, we felt she had a strong case of copyright

infringement; if that had not been our opinion, we would not have accepted her case.

The following parties were ultimately named as defendants in Paula's case: the Hilton Hotels Corporation, which manages the Hilton Americas-Houston hotel where the copies of Paula's kaleidoscopic designs were displayed; the Houston Convention Center Corporation, which owns the hotel where the copies of Paula's kaleidoscopic designs were displayed; Wilson & Associates, Inc., a design firm involved in the design of the copies; and Couristan, Inc., which manufactured the carpeting with the infringing designs and sold it to the Hilton Americas-Houston hotel. The papers that were filed with the court in the case can be seen online at <http://pacer.uscourts.gov/> (there is a small charge to view the documents).

Paula's case was filed in federal court in New York. Once they are filed, all cases in federal court are assigned to a federal judge, who is assigned to the case until the case is over. However, since Paula's case was eventually settled, there was never any trial before the judge or a jury.

Paula's case went to mediation. Federal courts strongly encourage settlement discussions between the parties, and for that reason virtually all cases in federal court are referred to some form of mediation. This mediation is non-binding, meaning that if the parties cannot agree on a settlement, the case goes back to a judge. The judge assigned to the case is generally not involved in the mediation discussions, so that she will not prejudge the case before trial.

The defendants were required to provide documents as part of the discovery process used in all filed cases. Those documents supported

our contention that the designs had been copied.

During the course of the investigation, as part of discovery, we were able to learn the exact number of blocks taken from Paula's quilts, that images of the carpeting appeared on the hotel's website, the size of the copied carpet, and sales figures relating to the carpeting.

Under the Copyright Act, a copyright owner is entitled to recover their lost sales and the infringer's profits resulting from the copying. If a copyright owner has registered their copyright rights within three months of the first publication, e.g., sale of

the work, or within three months of the first public showing of the work, they can choose to recover "statutory damages" — generally sought where the infringer has little or no profit. In a case of willful infringement, up to \$150,000 in statutory damages may be awarded at the discretion of the court. Additionally, if copyright rights are timely registered, it may be possible to recover some or all of your attorney's fees.

One of the lessons to be learned from this case is the following: If the creator thinks he or she has a good case, he or she should meet with several different attorneys who specialize

in intellectual property, and especially copyrights, to find an attorney that believes that there has been an infringement. If the case is a strong one, it is possible to make a financial arrangement with the attorney whereby the artist does not have to bear the entire cost of the case until there is a settlement. ▼

George Gottlieb, Esq. and Marc P. Misthal, Esq., Gottlieb Rackman & Reisman, P.C. 270 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016-0601, (212) 684-3900 www.grr.com

To see Paula Nadelstern's kaleidoscopic quilts, visit www.paulanadelstern.com.



Americas Hotel, Pre-Function Area



Kaleidoscopes & Quilts, p. 137



Americas Hotel, Grand Ballroom



Kaleidoscopes & Quilts, p. 33

Understand how to make copyright law work for you

Based on the slide presentation given at SAQA's May 2007 conference in Athens, Ohio, by George Gottlieb and Marc P. Misthal, from Gottlieb, Rackman & Reisman, P.C., intellectual property attorneys. For more information, visit their web site at www.grr.com.

The US Constitution provides that Congress shall have the power: "to promote the progress of science and useful arts, by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries." *U.S. Const. art. I, § 8, cl. 7.*

What is a copyright?

The Copyright Act protects original and creative works of authorship fixed in a tangible medium of expression.

- "Original" means independently created and not entirely copied from another source
- "Creative" means some minimal creativity, but the required level is extremely low
- "Fixed" means sufficiently permanent or stable to be perceived, reproduced or otherwise communicated for a period of more than transitory duration
- "Tangible Medium" means on paper, a filmstrip, on a computer screen—not just in your brain!

What copyright does not protect

- Ideas (though physical expressions of ideas are protected), concepts, discoveries, principles
- Formulas, processes, systems, methods, procedures
- Words and short phrases, such as names, titles and slogans
- Familiar symbols or designs
- Mere variations of typographic ornamentation, lettering or coloring

Copyrightable subject matter includes

- Literary works
- Musical works
- Dramatic works
- Pantomimes and choreographic works, when in fixed form
- Pictorial, graphic and sculptural works (here's where quilts come in)
- Motion picture and other audio and audiovisual works
- Architectural works

What rights does a copyright give you?

Copyright gives the owner the exclusive right to :

- Reproduce copies
- Prepare derivative works
- Distribute a work to the public (by sale or other transfer of ownership, or by rental, lease, or lending)
- Display the work publicly
- Example: If you create a quilt and show it at an exhibition, the exhibition organizer cannot, without your permission, make postcards of it and send them out

How to acquire copyright

- General rule: Copyright ownership vests in the author at the moment of creation of a work in a fixed medium
- Copyright protection is thus automatic when work is fixed
- There is no such thing as a "poor man's copyright" (i.e. mailing a photo of your quilt to yourself)
- Copyrights on works prepared by employees are owned by their employer
- Copyrights on works created pursuant to the directions of a pur-

chaser are owned by the buyer/commissioner

Copyright registration is optional but there are benefits

- You gain benefits (as they pertain to type of damages recovery) if you register the work before an infringement occurs
- Generally, you cannot start litigation if the work was first published in the United States unless you first obtain a registration
- You can register copyright at any time, but if you register within three months of publication, you can request attorneys' fees and statutory damages in any litigation

Copyright registration is easy

- Forms and other information available online at <http://www.copyright.gov>
- Fee: \$45 per application
- Copyright Office will help you if you have questions—call (202) 707-5959

Basis of an infringement claim

- Ownership of a valid and enforceable copyright
- Registration is prerequisite to bringing suit (for U.S. works only)
- Unauthorized copying. Absent direct evidence (e.g., admission or eye-witness testimony), this may be established by proof of a) access plus b) substantial similarity
- Substantial similarity is measured by the "ordinary observer test"
- Access is presumed if there is "striking" similarity
- Intent or knowledge is not required for infringement
- There is no "10%" or "7 points" rule. (i.e. you're still breaking copyright law if you change something 7 different ways)

USA on a scholarship

By Sue Dennis

As I boarded my long flight from Brisbane, Australia, to New York, it was with the mixed emotions of joy and trepidation. What would I find in the United States? How would I cope traveling alone? Would they understand my accent?

Two weeks later, toward the end of my trip, I found myself sipping a glass of California Zinfandel Rose on the 12th floor rooftop garden of an Upper West Side apartment building in Manhattan. As I sipped my wine, my host Alice explained how the building's residents had transformed a barren, inhospitable rooftop into an oasis with planter boxes and an herb garden. As I watched the sun set over the Hudson River and the lights illuminate the spire of the Empire State Building, I pinched myself. The birds' eye views were stunning. My brain's right side was already crammed with numerous big city images and ideas for future art quilts, and here I was

being presented with still more!

And that's what New York is all about — sensory overload. The guide-book can only prepare you for part of the experience with its listings of places and things to do. Interacting with the people, walking the streets and adventures come from being there.

Wow! This was a truly amazing experience and quilting had got me here. Thanks to the Quilters' Guild of NSW Inc., whose scholarship allowed me to attend the May 2007 SAQA conference in Athens, Ohio, with stopovers in New York before and after the conference.

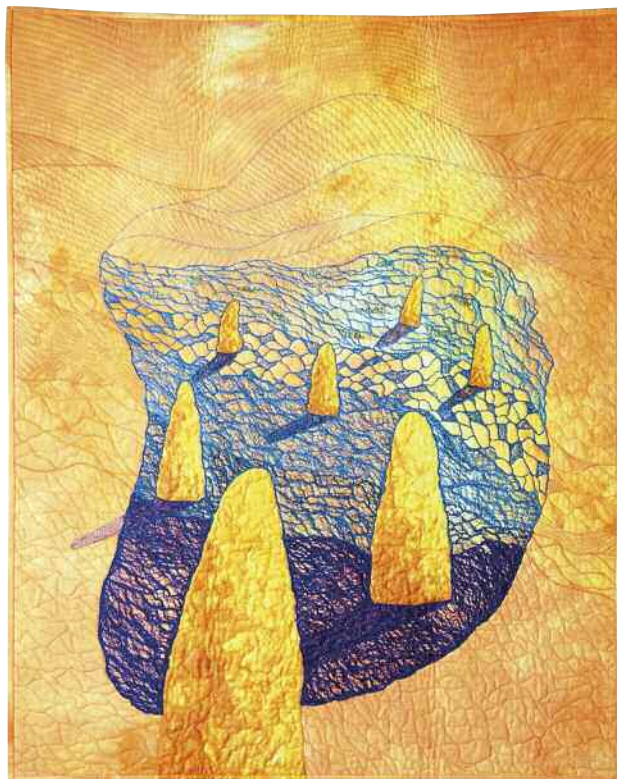
Two weeks earlier when I had arrived, jetlagged and weary, fellow SAQA member Jeri Riggs and her family were my welcoming hosts. Quilters the world over share a common language and bond so we had lots of laughter, questions about techniques, color, stitching and so on to keep us busy. Jeri is a member of the

Manhattan Quilters Guild, Fiber Revolution, and Salon Seven, and she is a wonderful knitter. Her studio space and fabric collection are to die for. A truly passionate quilter who loves the full spectrum of color, her stash was spilling out of the built-in cupboard and a wonderful array of small art quilts were pinned to the design wall. A computer area and large worktables completed her slice of heaven.

My first foray into Grand Central Station and the city was with Jeri on a cold, wet Saturday. I was overwhelmed and inspired by the majesty and variety of the architecture. Ornate pressed metal fronted office blocks, the residential decay of Harlem, the up-market brownstones, Gothic, and post-modern all jostle for dominance.

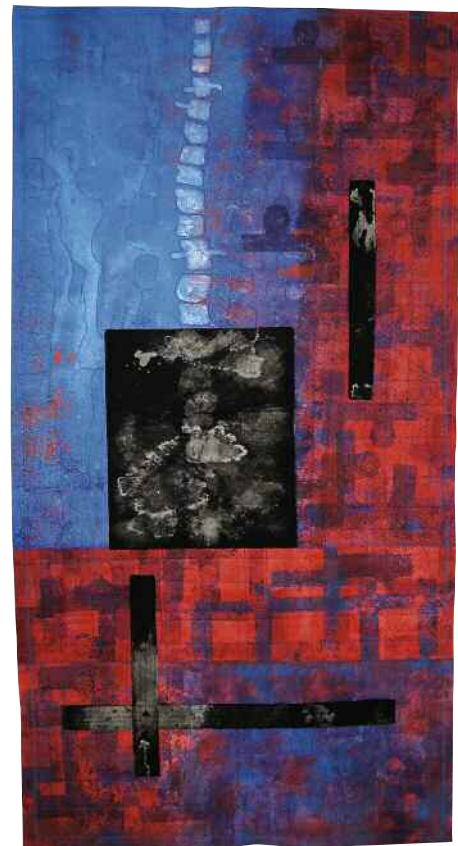
My neck was cramped from looking

See "Scholarship" on page 26



Right: **Once Pre-Cambrian Seas**
45" x 36" © 2007

Far right: **Spine**
41" x 21" © 2007



Lessons from the art of the commission

By Margaret Cusack

Although I have been a SAQA member for many years, I don't call myself a quilter, or even a quilt artist. I'm an illustrator who creates "realistic images with stitchery and fabric." My background is in graphic design, but my love affair with fabric and texture is the real reason for my 35-year stitched artwork career. Most of my artwork is commissioned by advertising agencies, magazine editors, and book publishers, and I also create large-scale hangings for architects, corporations, and individuals. Though I'm not a quilter, I share many of the same interests as most SAQA members and, like you, I love creating art with fabric and thread. Carolyn Lee Vehslage suggested that I write this article to expand on my presentation as the speaker for SAQA's August mentoring session conference call on the art of the commission.

There's an old saying which has a lot of truth to it: "Success is when opportunity meets preparation." But, how do you get an assignment? How do you negotiate the best price? And, how should you follow through so that you and the client feel that you've both succeeded? In many cases, the business side of being an artist is not well absorbed by the time you're ready to earn a living from your creativity. Many artists take a lifetime to learn how to be a profes-

sional in the art world. Along the way, some abandon the idea of making money from their artwork. Or, worse yet, they give up on making art altogether.

I hope you'll benefit from what I've learned over the years: how to approach your artwork as a business person and, in so doing, succeed as an artist. Some of these ideas may be new to you, and others may be practices that you already follow. Some evolved from articles, motivational speakers, gallery directors, and other artists. Many of my methods are based on learning from my own mistakes. I believe that art is a competitive sport, and I'm constantly looking for ways to promote and help my career. It's important to stay flexible and open to new ideas. In truth, we all have a lot to learn.

Promotion

"Don't hide your light under a bushel."

During that SAQA mentoring session, a member said that she was reluctant to promote her artwork for fear that she'd be seen as being "too pushy." This reflects an attitude that stymies many people (especially

women) and is most likely an unnecessary hold-over from the time before the women's liberation movement of the 1970s. It's important to spend a percentage of your time promoting your artwork. The amount of time spent is up to you, but it's absolutely critical to keep at it and not become dormant when it comes to promotion. My advice is that you should readjust your mind to the fact that clients (art buyers, gallery owners, and others) are looking for the very talent you possess, and you are actually doing them a service when you inform them about your artwork. You are making their life easier when you contact them with samples of your artwork. If these words startle you, then repeat them several times while looking in the mirror.

How to find commissions

Opportunities are everywhere. You just have to be open to new possibilities, recognize them, and then act on your instincts with the right attitude, responding appropriately and professionally. I have gotten commissions because of many unusual circumstances: from talking to a neighbor,

United States of America

29" x 43"

Machine-stitched appliqué, dyeing. This image was commissioned by Ogilvy & Mather Advertising for American Express in 1984 for promotional posters. It was later made into jigsaw puzzles by F.X. Schmid USA, Inc.



Below: *Vase of Flowers*, 24" x 18"

Machine-stitched appliqué. I created this image for *Picture Your World in Appliqué*, published by Watson-Guptill in 2004. Autographed copies of the book are available on margaretcusack.com.



sorting the mail, going to a party, sending out postcards, attending a brunch, going to meetings, etc. It's also important to keep in touch with previous clients. They can be a great source of new commissions and referrals.

Be proactive

Do the work. Get your images seen by those who might purchase your artwork or commission you to create new art. Have your artwork included in image banks, with art consultants, gallery directors, etc. Submit your artwork as "mixed media" to non-quilt exhibitions.

Having your own web site is a must these days. If you don't have one already, make the creation of a web site a top priority. Then share links with artists and organizations that you admire. Consider posting your artwork on art web sites. Every postcard, letterhead, business card, e-mail message, etc. should include your web site information.

Joining organizations like SAQA is a great way to learn more about opportunities and exhibitions. Initiate articles about your artwork in magazines that relate to your field and also branch out by contacting general interest publications. Practice writing press releases. (See the SAQA site to find out about my packet, "The Art of the Commission." It's full of information on contracts, press releases, copyright, etc.)

Read with a pencil

Subscribe to magazines and e-groups that will alert you to upcoming exhibitions and commission opportunities. Even reading the daily newspaper may give you some leads about architects and art consultants who should know about your artwork. Think of it as helping them to do their job better because if you send them your promotion material, they will then know of you as a resource and they might consider you for that new project that they are working on.



Above: *Absolut Pennsylvania*, 28" x 34"

Machine-stitched appliqué and quilting; the script lettering is hand embroidery. This image was commissioned by G2NY in 2002 for in-store point-of-purchase posters in Pennsylvania liquor stores.

Consider getting someone to represent you

If you feel that you are not proficient at promoting your artwork, hire someone who is able to do it better. Be prepared to pay 25-30% of your retail price to an agent or art consultant and up to 50% to a gallery. However, if you are not satisfied with the representative, move on and find another, or try representing yourself. An artist/representative relationship is somewhat like a marriage. To protect both of you, your agreement with a representative should be covered by a contract that includes terms, job description, and also a procedure to end the artist/representative relationship, if that should come to pass. Contracts of this sort are included in the *Graphic Artists Guild Handbook: Pricing and Ethical Guidelines*.

Be prepared

Have up-to-date business cards and postcards with you at all times. Keep

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Lessons

from page 11

a small notebook and pen handy as well so that you can make a note of the information you got from that person you just met at your husband's cousin's birthday party!

Also have a few clever words ready when someone at that same party asks you, "What do you do?" By describing your artwork in a short conversational blurb, you will pique their interest and you'll find that they will quickly ask, "When is your next exhibition?" "Do you have a web site?" and "How can I get on your mailing list?"

Blurbs

Create your own blurb (some people call it an "elevator speech" — something that you can say to a new acquaintance in a short elevator trip) in response to the question, "What do you do?" To write your blurb, it's helpful to collaborate with another person. Person A should take a few minutes to describe in simple terms to Person B what Person A does. It's actually best to use simple words, not "art speak." (Eliminate words with multiple syllables). Person B will write down the description and key phrases. It's also important to use verbs to describe the effect that your artwork has on others. Person B will then help Person A to craft a few conversational sentences and rewrite them until they are both satisfied.

Then Person A and Person B will change roles and create a blurb for Person B. Practice your blurb in front of a mirror, into a telephone, etc. Keep altering it until the blurb sounds conversational, natural, and upbeat.

One way to get to deliver your blurb to someone you've met at a party or elsewhere is to ask that person, "What do *you* do?" Once you have finished discussing his/her vocation, then you can steer the conversation in your own direction and volunteer part of your blurb. S/he will ask you a follow-up question, and then you can tell him/her the rest of your blurb. The trick is to make it

sound off-the-cuff and extemporaneous. Non-artists are intrigued with artists and want to know more, but they don't want to be lectured. Work the conversation in such a way that they want to find out more and more about your art.

Talk to people

It sounds almost too simple, but by being friendly and starting conversations with others at networking events, in elevators, at parties, etc., you might very well initiate a connection that could lead to a commission. As I mentioned, I have gotten commissions from many situations that at first glance seemed to be unpromising but in the long run were fruitful.

Just today, I was at a rally dealing

Keep a positive attitude and make each commission one that you are proud of.

with a neighborhood problem. I began talking with a woman who was standing next to me, and it turned out that she was also an artist and that we had graduated from the same college, Pratt Institute. When the question of "What do you do?" came up, I described my work, "I'm an artist. I do realistic images, but they're a bit unusual — they're made with fabric and thread." When she asked for more details, I said, "I do some personal artwork, but most of my images are commissioned for use as illustrations or large-scale hangings.

My artwork has actually 'warmed up' the image of many corporations and products, and that's how I get new projects." Then I gave her my postcard (which has a colorful image on the front and includes a description and my contact information on the back). I suggested that if she liked, she could take a look at my web site. By the end of our short conversation, she had given me the name of a friend of hers, who is a designer at a publishing company. This lead may prove to be a very productive possibility for me and I am very grateful for her generosity. On the other hand, if I had not initiated the conversation, nothing would have come of the fact that we were both standing together on a nondescript street corner in Brooklyn.

The lesson is: Go out and talk to people. If you stay at home, you may be able to continue reading your novel or watching a favorite television show, but neither of these activities will do much to help your career. However, if you go to a gallery opening or a professional meeting, you are likely to make some connections or reinforce a relationship that might just further your career. Even chance encounters, like mine at the rally, can prove to be productive. Part of the trick is to be prepared. There is nothing more unprofessional than "fishing around" in your bag for a pen and paper.

Form a support group

Find several active artists who are good at what they do, whose work you admire, and whose personalities mesh with yours. They need not be quilters. Arrange for a specific day once a month (for example, the second Wednesday at 1:00 pm) and have lunch with them at a restaurant. If you have it at your home, you'll find that your guests will never leave! The anonymity of a restaurant makes these meetings more professional.

Show one another new artwork, promotion pieces, etc. Exchange leads

and advice with each other. By sharing information with others, your generosity will be reciprocated. You'll find that besides the friendships that result, you will definitely benefit in many ways from a monthly lunch with your support group. The members can be a great source of information, whether you are trying to estimate a fair price for a commission or trying to track down a particular technique, fabric or art supply.

When you have interest from clients

At your meeting, present your clients with a packet of samples of your artwork, articles, your résumé, postcards, etc. When you show your portfolio, position your most important piece as the first piece shown. Put your second-best piece at the very end of your portfolio. Make your portfolio read as a story and take time to give the details of the commissions. Take notes during the meeting, but do not feel obliged to commit to a price until you have given more thought to the project.

After meeting with potential clients, follow through in a professional manner. Send a congenial, handwritten note on one of your colorful cards. Later, put together an estimate and draft a contract that spells out a payment structure and delivery dates.

Hold onto your rights

If your clients submit their own contracts to you, read them with care. Know that contracts are meant to be altered. Just because it's printed does not mean that it can't be adjusted. Make an enlarged copy of the contract onto legal-sized paper, which will give you extra room to write your comments and suggestions in the margins.

Be hard on the problem and soft on the people

The reality is that in the course of most commissions, some problems and disagreements will surface. However, in all of your dealings with

both current and potential clients, always work toward solving problems without demonizing or attacking the contact people you're dealing with. Being friendly, respectful, and professional is always best. In some cases, your contact people are merely messengers for the actual client. Their jobs may be in jeopardy if the project goes sour. By working out disagreements amicably, you will have allies for future commissions.

Be courteous – but also be brazen

If you are not able to get the fee you had in mind, negotiate for other arrangements that will compensate you in a different way. Here's an example: I did a stitched artwork poster as a pro bono for the *New York Is Book Country* festival. Though I did the project for free, I asked for and received hundreds of free posters which I later autographed and sold and also used as gifts to promote my artwork to other clients. The press coverage and exposure of my artwork at the event and at a fund-raising auction was more compensation than I would have received monetarily.

Attitude

When dealing with commissions, don't let your interest wane because you may have to compromise and cope with opinions other than your own. Keep a positive attitude and make each commission one that you are proud of. Make it personal and fresh. Your clients hired you for your talent. Don't give them anything less than your full energy. Remember that your reputation rests on your last commission. When it is completed, send the clients a thank-you note and keep in touch with them, keeping them aware of new projects and exhibitions. Get the artwork photographed professionally. Use the image on postcard announcements and send them to other clients, friends, and relatives. Write a press release and mail it and the image to magazines, art consultants, etc. Consider

offering your clients printed note cards of their new masterpiece.

Resources

A wealth of information is available from people who are very knowledgeable about business practices, promotion and finding new opportunities. Here are some books and web resources:

Cold Calling for Women by Wendy Weiss
erin@wendyweiss.com
www.wendyweiss.com

The Art of Self Promotion by Ilise Benun
ilise@marketing-mentor.com
www.marketing-mentor.com

How to Survive & Prosper as an Artist
by Caroll Michels
carollmich@aol.com
www.carollmichels.com

Art Marketing 101 by Constance Smith
info@artmarketing.com
www.artmarketing.com

Sign up to receive their informative e-mails.

In closing

Coming back to the SAQA member who was concerned about appearing too pushy, I'll end with a quote from artist Chuck Close that's taped to my studio wall. When asked, "Are you plagued by self doubt?" he answered, "I think I'm plagued by confidence." We should all take a lesson from him and strive to be plagued by confidence in our artwork! ▼

SAQA professional artist member Margaret Cusack is the author of Picture Your World in Appliqué, published by Watson-Guption. She presents slide lectures, presentations, and workshops to quilt groups, art guilds, and universities. Cusack's client list includes American Express; Avon; Bloomingdale's; Howard Johnson; Little, Brown & Co.; Macmillan; Maxwell House Coffee; Sony Music; The New York Times; Peek Freans; RCA; Reader's Digest; US Postal Service, Vanity Fair Magazine, Seagram's; Singer; and Texaco. Her web site is margaretcusack.com.

SAQA member gallery: *Winter Solstice*



Nancy E. Kimpel

Winter Solstice

32" X 36" © 2007

Winter in the Midwest is grey, gloomy and cold. This quilt captures that feeling.

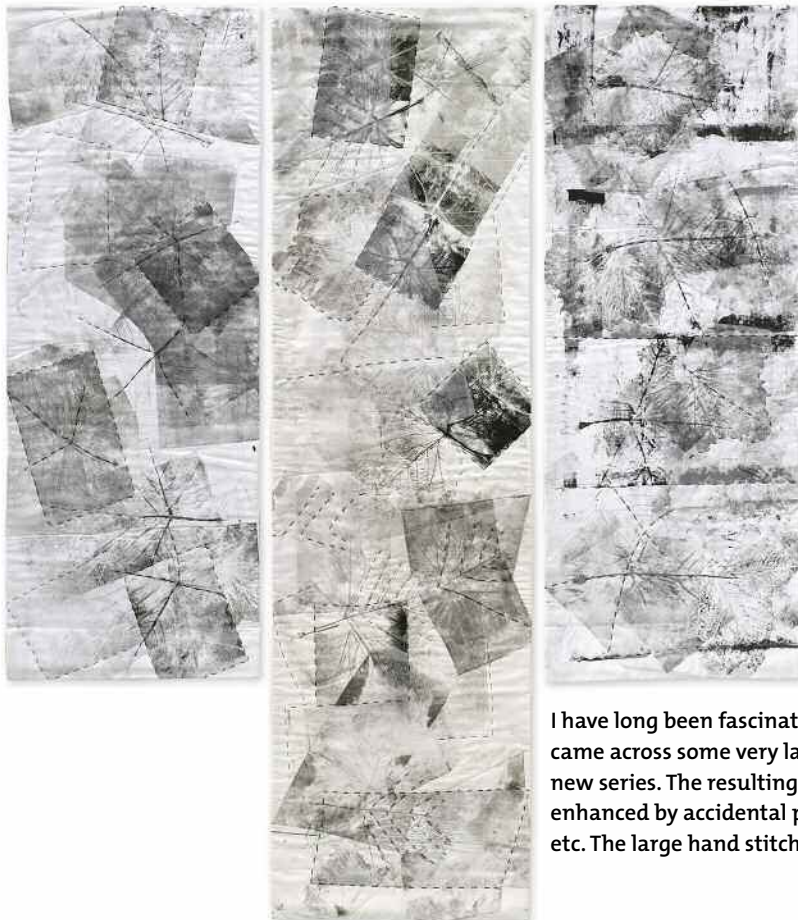
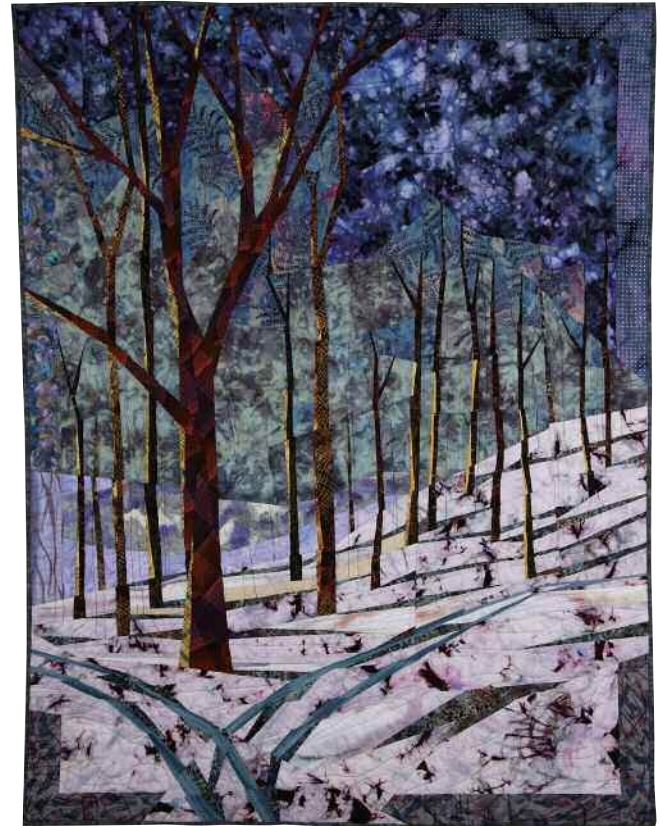
Linda Beach

Home Before Dark

50" x 39" © 2007

www.lindabeachartquilts.com

Our brief winter days here in Alaska and a late afternoon walk out to my mailbox were the beginnings of this quilt.



Dominie Nash

Big Leaf 2

57" x 48" © 2006

www.dominienash.com

I have long been fascinated with the shape and structure of leaves of all kinds. Last fall I came across some very large leaves; I printed fabric with them and this was the start of a new series. The resulting quilts are mostly whole cloth, with the leaves taking center stage, enhanced by accidental patterns created by the printing tools, variable amounts of paint, etc. The large hand stitching echoes the vein patterns of the leaves.



Eileen Doughty

Barefoot Birthday

41" x 39" © 2003

www.doughtydesigns.com

What can you do in Wisconsin for a winter birthday party? When you are sweet sixteen and somewhat goofy, you can run around the house barefoot in the snow. The house and those friends are memories now, and only the trees are left to cast their shadows on a moonlit night.

Dan Olfe

Ice

51" x 52" © 2007

www.danolfe.com

This quilt recalls a frozen pond with patches of snow, and bubbles showing through the ice. To create this whole cloth quilt, I used 2D and 3D software in several steps. The 3D part involved the simulation of glass objects and a water surface. The resulting computer image was digitally printed, then quilted with white thread along the white lines in the image.

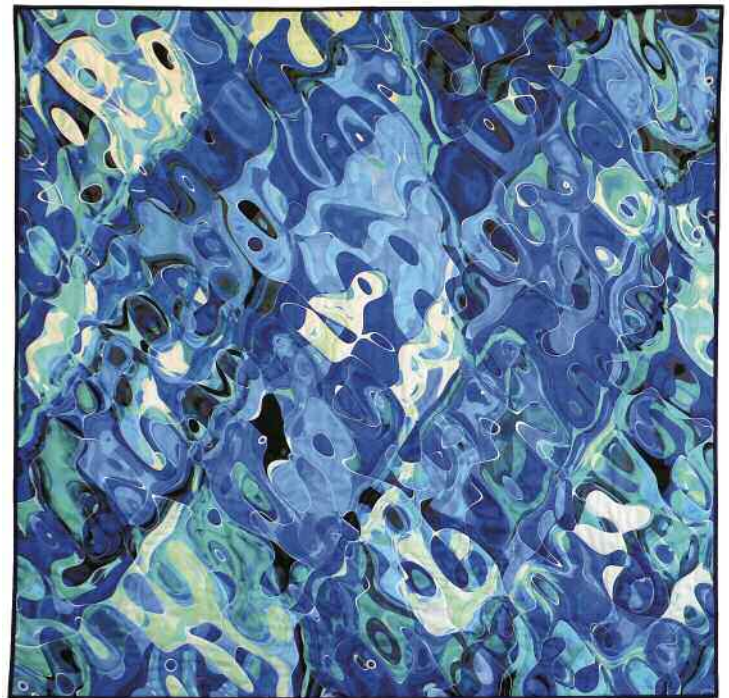


Nancy G. Cook

Winter Confection III

39" x 24" © 2006

I created the snow misting with layers of silk organza, then machine stitched the falling snow. Each short machine stitch ends with a crystal bead to sparkle like the sun on falling snowflakes in Iowa.



Karin Franzen

Since I started making art quilts in 2003, my efforts have mostly been directed at mastering the medium. This includes developing or learning techniques that give me the results I envision. Before 2003, I had never seen art quilts. I was in a bead store when a woman came in with a book of Ruth McDowell's. Seeing her artwork made me want to try my hand at it. The only other medium I've worked in and entered into art shows had been beaded jewelry.

I have an art minor but have continued to take classes regularly over the years — mostly in drawing, painting, ceramics, and metal smithing. I like drawing in particular, because it trains you to become a good observer and to pay close attention to your subject. The power of observation is an important skill for any artist to cultivate. As a retired structural engineer, I have a good working knowledge of mathematics and physics which is helpful in solving construction challenges.

I was raised within the context of a religious tradition. My father was a mortician and ran an ambulance service for the community. His business was right next door to our home and the whole family shared the responsibility for taking emergency calls. As I was growing up, I was very much aware of both the material and spiritual aspects of the human condition. I feel a constant presence of the divine in everyday life, and I try to capture these intangible qualities in my subjects.

I've had many mentors over the years. University art professors and gallery owners are a very important resource and keep me informed about shows and other opportunities. I regularly associate with other artists (of all media) for critiques and to share information. Within the framework of art quilting, Ree Nancarrow of Denali Park, AK and Ingrid Taylor of Fairbanks, AK are both important mentors. They are long-time fiber artists with a wealth of experience



and generously share their knowledge. So do my friends in the Cabin Fever Quilt Guild and other smaller groups I belong to.

My style is representational, or realistic. I would also call myself a colorist since I love to experiment with the interplay of complex colors.

I have two very different and somewhat polar opposite (left brain, right brain) sources of inspiration. It's my habit to pay attention to every detail of light, color, form, line, texture, etc. in nature. It's a preoccupation, an obsession, and it fuels my artwork. That's a large part of why I've chosen Alaska as my home. But the other

Pirouette #2
36" x 42"

This is an experiment using a new technique: layer a number of fabrics, stitch through all layers, slash upper layers to reveal underlying layers.





All Fly Away
52" x 77", © 2006

create a sense of movement (by creating "shadow" figures in and around my birds), or a sense of atmospheric perspective (by layering them over important design elements), or for creating an aura of mystery. I'm now buying silk organza that I dye, discharge, and print to create my own organic-looking fabrics. I experiment with incorporating other materials such as Tyvek®, plastic, paper, acrylic paints, but sparingly, because I like the "hand" of fabrics.

Not counting my time, I'd estimate spending an average of about \$8,000 per year on expenses related to my artwork. I consider this a business and keep track of all related expenses including studio, utilities, vehicle, travel, photography, equipment, materials, education, memberships, entry fees, shipping, etc.

My primary focus as an artist is to continue to grow, to keep improving, to keep exploring and trying new

See "Karin Franzen" on page 24

source of inspiration stems from my engineer's brain. I thrive on problem solving and figuring out how to construct complex images. Challenge inspires me.

I'm definitely process driven. I enjoy designing, problem-solving, conceptualizing, exploring new techniques, and assembling the pieces. That said, I do finish almost all of my pieces and rarely have more than a few going at a time. Unfinished (unresolved) artwork nags at me. I can't set it aside mentally.

When I started college 30+ years ago, my intention was to major in art. But out of a general fear about my artwork not being good enough and concerns about not being to make a living at it, I gave it up. In some ways I've considered that a mis-step, since now that I'm making art full time I feel very fulfilled, like I'm doing what's really right for me. But then all of the other skills and maturity I've acquired along the way are very important to where I'm at now and I don't think I would change a thing.

It's my habit to stay mostly focused on my current artwork and its progress. I've never had to look very far for an interesting opportunity and I put most of my energy into fulfilling present commitments. I joined SAQA because I need to develop a greater awareness of what's happen-

ing in the world of art quilts. I'm hoping I can get the lay of the land and start planning with a more comprehensive idea of all of my options.

During the past few years, I really focused on developing the look that I want. A key change was to stop restricting myself to quilting cottons, and to start using a rich variety of textiles. One of my favorite developments has been the use of sheer fabrics. I've explored using them to



Barley Eaters. 35" x 48", © 2007

Avoiding the “hobby loss” tax rules

by Richard A. Buggy, J.D., LL.M., CPA

Small business owners, particularly those who run their businesses on a part-time basis or who consistently operate at a tax loss, need to be aware of the “hobby loss” rules of Section 183 of the Internal Revenue Code. The hobby loss rules give the IRS a framework in which to evaluate whether an activity is suffi-

The hobby loss rules are intended to prevent taxpayers from claiming tax deductions for expenses that are really personal in nature.

ciently “businesslike” to be respected as a legitimate business or whether it is merely a hobby undertaken for personal pleasure. The hobby loss rules are intended to prevent taxpayers from claiming tax deductions for expenses that are really personal in nature.

Originally put into law to prevent wealthy taxpayers from using “side business” losses to offset other income, the hobby loss rules have given the IRS a set of fairly subjective standards with which to recharacterize business deductions as nondeductible personal expenses.

The hobby loss rules have particular relevance for artists and collectors, who have been frequent targets of the IRS. In fact, there are dozens of court cases decided against artists and col-

lectors under the hobby loss rules. It can be especially difficult for an artist to convince the IRS that a personal passion can be turned into a legitimate business.

When is an activity “engaged in for profit”

The hobby loss rules simply state that tax deductions will not be allowed in excess of income from an activity unless the activity is carried on to make a profit. For a business to be “engaged in for profit”, the IRS will look at all the facts and circumstances to see if the taxpayer entered into the business and continues to conduct the business with the objective of making a profit. There is no bright line test applied by the IRS to determine whether any particular business is conducted with the required profit motive. Relevant factors include:

- Manner in which the taxpayer carries on the activity
- Expertise of the taxpayer
- Consultation with business advisors
- Time and effort expended
- Expectation of profit
- Existence of a written business plan
- Separate books and records
- Separate bank account
- Capital contributed by the taxpayer
- Success of the taxpayer in similar prior activities
- History of profits (or losses)
- Taxpayer’s other simultaneous jobs
- Taxpayer’s overall financial status
- Elements of personal pleasure or recreation

No single factor is determinative, but the burden of proof is on the tax-

payer to demonstrate a good faith, honest objective to make a profit. However, there does not have to be a certainty of making a profit, nor even a reasonable likelihood of profit. The taxpayer must merely intend in good faith to make a profit.

Taxpayers often have multiple reasons for entering into an activity aside from making a profit. A profit-making motive need not be exclusive. Personal gratification is not a prohibited purpose, and while we may be left with the impression that a profit motive is easier to justify if the business owner derives limited pleasure and enjoyment from an activity, at least one court has noted that “suffering has never been made a prerequisite to deductibility.” Nevertheless, the IRS and the courts have never

It can be especially difficult for an artist to convince the IRS that a personal passion can be turned into a legitimate business.

agreed on whether a profit making motive must be the dominant driving factor, and there are currently no uniform standards for evaluating whether an activity is a hobby.

If found not to be a legitimate business, any income from a hobby must still be reported on your tax return, but hobby expenses will only be

allowed as miscellaneous itemized deductions (which are deductible only if you itemize your personal deductions and only to the extent that such hobby losses exceed 2% of your adjusted gross income).

Who is subject to the “hobby loss” rules?

By statute, the hobby loss rules apply only to sole proprietorships and “S” corporations. However, through IRS and judicial interpretation, the hobby loss rules have also been applied to partnerships, limited liability companies, trusts and estates. Regular “C” corporations are excluded (although the IRS has other tools by which it can limit expenses claimed by a C corporation).

Most frequently, the hobby loss rules are relevant for sole proprietors who report their income and expenses on Schedule C of their personal income tax returns. Sole proprietors are much more likely to face a hobby loss accusation by the IRS than are taxpayers who conduct their business using a more formal entity such as a limited liability company or an “S” corporation. However, the use of a corporation or LLC is not a guarantee that the IRS will leave you alone.

Presumption that profit motive exists

Section 183 does provide a “safe harbor” to protect taxpayers. If an activity results in a tax return profit for three out of any five consecutive years, it is presumptively assumed that the business is legitimate and that the hobby loss rules do not apply. Keep in mind, however, that this presumption may be rebutted by the IRS. Also, satisfying the 3-out-of-5 rule does not provide unlimited exemption from IRS challenge. The test is done on a rolling five year basis. Meeting the test today does not

necessarily mean you will meet it next year.

If losses are expected for the first several years of a new business, the taxpayer has the right to ask the IRS to postpone for four years a determination of whether the activity is engaged in for profit. However, the statute of limitations for assessment of taxes on the intervening years will be extended if the election to postpone is made. If you make this election, you may find yourself under audit for tax returns filed up to seven years ago. Clearly, making the election makes it much more likely that the IRS will conduct an audit.

Qualifying profits

In determining if profits are generated in any particular year for purposes of the 3-out-of-5 test, the IRS will generally look at the method of accounting used by the taxpayer. Since most small businesses are operated on a cash basis, profits are also determined on a cash-in/cash-out basis. Therefore, amounts receivable for goods sold which have not yet been collected do not count as current year profits for cash basis businesses.

Capital gains generated through the sale of business assets will usually be considered profits. However, be aware that gains from the sale of inventory and capital gains from the sale of assets held for investment purposes may result in different tax treatment. Defending against a hobby loss challenge may be more troublesome if you are claiming capital gain treatment.

Finally, it is unclear whether unrealized appreciation in the value of business assets counts as profits for hobby loss purposes. For an artist or collector, unrealized gains can be a very significant item. Unrealized

appreciation is certainly a factor that can help support a finding of profit motive, but by itself is probably not enough.

Recommendations

Understanding the hobby loss rules and taking appropriate planning steps can go a long way in avoiding an IRS challenge altogether or preparing your defense if you are audited. The best ways to guard against an IRS hobby loss challenge are to maintain detailed books and records, set up and utilize a separate bank account, not mingle personal and business financial matters, and to have a written business plan that is regularly updated. If you have another full-time or part-time job, consider keeping a log of time devoted to each activity.

Also, as your level of involvement grows, you may want to consider incorporating your business or setting up a limited liability company. Doing so helps to support the legitimacy of your business. It also makes sense for other reasons, including (1) helping to limit your personal liability, (2) providing a better perception of “permanence,” (3) showing the IRS that you are serious, and (4) possibly making it easier to obtain more favorable bank or vendor financing.

Taking these steps may not make you bullet-proof, but they are powerful factors in defending against an IRS audit. ▼

Richard Buggy is a managing partner of Saslow Lufkin & Buggy, LLP. The web site is www.slbcpa.com.

SAQA University: A revolutionary way of learning

By Lisa Chipetine

With the successful launch of our monthly mentorship conference calls, the board has given approval to proceed with the development of a formal SAQA University (SAQA-U). This is a groundbreaking event in SAQA's history. We are building the first comprehensive online knowledge repository dedicated to professional development for artists in our medium. This database will be an online initiative, working as a part of our web site, to make pertinent information easier to find, review, and contribute towards. SAQA-U is a specific benefit for SAQA members only — it will not be a public site. You will have to log in to access SAQA-U, just as you do when you enter the Members Only section of the website. SAQA-U will provide an instant vehicle by which we can collect all of the knowledge within our membership base.

Mission statement

SAQA-U is a centralized knowledge center, gathered by and for SAQA members. It is dedicated to the professional development of the art quilter by providing guidance, training, resources, and information in these areas:

- Business and marketing
- Art and textile history, theory, and biography
- Education
- Resources
- Technology

Once the board gave approval to proceed, I set about establishing a SAQA-U content team. I was thrilled to receive emails from members volunteering their subject matter expertise towards this initiative. The following members are part this groundbreaking event:

June Underwood (History, theory and biography)
Patsy Moreland (History, theory and biography)
Anne Copeland (Education; Business and marketing)
Terry Kramzar (Education; Resources)
Peg Keeney (Education; Resources)
Susan Crouse-Kemp (Technology)
Karen Asherman (Technology)
Gloria Hansen (Technology)
Joyce Martelli (Business and marketing)
Lisa Chipetine (Chair, Business and marketing)
Eileen Dougherty (Oversight, Technology)
Phillippa Lack (Presentation Pro)

Each member is dedicating her experience in one of our five high-level areas. Under each category, we are looking to break down each subject into subcategories:

- Audio discussions (mentorship calls)
- Articles, PowerPoint presentations, etc.
- Suggested reading
- Links
- Member tips

You, as a SAQA member, are an important part of SAQA University. Have you ever thought of documenting your knowledge, whether it is a technique, organizational tip, or just a book that you would love for others to read? Well now is your chance to “pay forward” and share your knowledge with your peers. Don't be intimidated if you're not computer savvy. We've solved that problem by developing a position called the presentation pro, which Phillippa Lack of Wyoming has generously volunteered to fill.

As presentation pro, Phillippa will be able to advise, help, and guide you in your documentation efforts. She will be able to take your notes, photos, and diagrams, and format them

for publishing on SAQA-U.

After investigating the best structure with which to proceed with SAQA-U, we decided to launch SAQA-U as a “wiki,” defined as “a web site or similar online resource which allows users to add and edit content collectively.”

Those of you who have dealt with Wikipedia have dealt with a wiki; you can think of it as an evolved blog. However, it is much more powerful — the equivalent to an online library system. In a wiki scenario, *you* will be able to add your knowledge to SAQA-U at any time. Most wikis

*SAQA-U is looking
for YOU!*

contain a search function, so you will be able to search for books, articles, or other materials on the subject you are interested in learning.

The entire SAQA-U content team was involved with researching, testing, and investigating different software alternatives. We wanted to be able to give members a one-stop-shopping approach to knowledge development, and found that wikispaces.com offered the best vehicle to house this library of information.

I was surprised to learn that we would not have to start from ground zero in terms of developing content for the site. Martha Sielman's daughter, Katie, diligently created a wonderful index of all of the SAQA *Journal* articles beginning with the very first issue. She matched them to specific categories (e.g. Education, Business,

etc.). June Underwood and Patsy Moreland championed the task of aligning these articles to our SAQA-U structure. We have many of the SAQA *Journal* issues electronically available already. We are in the process of having the rest of them scanned.

We all have different talents and different goals in reference to our art. SAQA-U strives to address your individual needs on all levels; our SAQA-U content team has a diversity of backgrounds that's hard to find even in corporate America. I feel

proud and honored to be part of this collaborative effort, surrounded by a highly intelligent team that is happy to contribute their time, knowledge and contacts towards this important program. Many thanks to my SAQA-U team members.

SAQA-U is looking for YOU! If you have any subject matter expertise that you would like to share with the SAQA-U's content team, or if you want to volunteer to help with this historical event, please contact us:

Lisa Chipetine
 Chairman, SAQA University Committee
 lisa@threadplay.com
 Phone: (516) 857-3228
 Fax: (212) 202-3647

Phillippa Lack
 Presentation pro
 phil@pkldesigns.com

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.

SAQA University structure

Here is the roadmap (which will probably change over time) for the initial development of SAQA-U.



HISTORY THEORY BIOGRAPHY

History of Textile Art
 History of Women in Art
 Theories of Art & Beauty
 Theories of Contemp. Art Movement
 The Art Quilt
 The VIPs of Fiber Art
 Leaders of the Fiber Medium
 Critics
 Trends
 Resources for History and Theory
 Case Studies (Evolution of venues)

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 Karen Asherman (NY)
 June Underwood (OR)
 Peggy Keeney (MI)
 Joyce Martelli (NY)
 Lisa Chipetine (NY)
 Susan Crouse-Kemp (CO)
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SAQA UNIVERSITY REPOSITORY STRUCTURE:
 Page 1 of 1 - Issue 5
 Last Update: September 11, 2007
 Process Owner: Lisa Chipetine

Meet your regional representatives

Kathie Briggs

Michigan Co-Representative
www.kathiebriggs.com



After many years of living in a metropolitan locale and working in business and education, I am finally living my dream. Every time I enter my

studio overlooking a woodland lake, I find inspiration in the ever-changing seasons and shifting colors of the woods. The trees, as well as the abundant northern Michigan wildlife, supply endless opportunities for study and interpretation.

As a self-taught artist, I am continually fascinated by the interplay of color, form, and texture. Exploring new techniques of surface design encourages an aspect of play in me that emerges in my fiber art dolls and

quilts, which often include tactile elements like beading and layering, as well as dimensional components like wired leaves. I enjoy combining my own dyed and painted fabric with a wide variety of commercial fabrics. The silks, velvets and even cheese-cloth I use for art dolls also manage to find their way into the quilts. Most of my art dolls convey a fantasy theme, which I find an interesting complement to my nature-focused art quilts.

Increasing the exposure and appreciation of art quilts to my region is one of my personal goals. In addition to serving as Michigan's SAQA co-representative, I am part of Fabrications, a group of four artists who sponsor a fiber arts retreat each autumn in northern Michigan. After bringing an art quilt show to my community, I was asked to head up a local fiber arts design group. I also work with my local arts council to bring fiber art programs into area schools.



Luna, 41" x 42", © Kathie Briggs

Desiree Vaughn

Michigan Co-Representative
www.desireevaughn.com



I credit my grandmother with teaching me quilting. As her age advanced, she needed help cutting, pinning, and sewing the tra-

ditional quilts she made. Near the end of her life, she made a quilt for each of my siblings. She saved mine for last, thinking that I had the skills to finish it if fate didn't give her the time to. Fate didn't. In the early 90s, I had to take a quilting class so I could finish the quilt Grandma started for me. It still isn't finished. I saw a *Quilt National* catalog and never went back.

It has been an exciting journey of learning about principles of design, techniques, and even the business side of art. I am fortunate to have been invited to work with several galleries and exhibit artwork in state and national shows. This past year I have started teaching, which has

Square One

36" x 35" © 2005 Desiree Vaughn



really been rewarding. The connections and friendships I have made through quilts and SAQA are probably the best part of this experience.

Prior to quilting taking over my life, my husband and I raised quarter horses in Columbus, Ohio. In 2001 we moved to the Traverse City area of Michigan where we live today along with one very large but sweet dog.

Clairan Ferrono

Wisconsin/Illinois Representative
www.fabric8tions.com



Although I have done many kinds of needlework since I was a small child, my formal education has been in languages and literature. I taught English and writing for over 20 years. I began to learn to quilt in 1989. In 2000, I decided to give up teaching to become a studio artist.

I am fascinated by color and pattern. I like to fit together wild and improbable patterns and colors. What happens when seemingly unrelated elements come together? Patterns are both hidden and revealed. A new landscape may emerge. I am drawn to a dense visual surface. The tension between foreground and background can mirror the problem of our daily lives. Bombarded by images, sound, clutter, chatter and message, how do we distinguish the important, the necessary and the real? What comes from within and what from without? This constant push/pull — interior and exterior, history and present, family and individual — and the resulting struggle for balance informs my artwork. The quest is to create harmony amidst the chaos, to get to the heart of the matters and to create multi-layered artwork that serves as visual metaphor.

Patsy Moreland

Oregon/Washington Co-Representative
www.fiberworksstudio.com



Curiosity led me as a child into photography and sewing, which led to surface techniques on cloth, paper, leather, and wood.

They were all influenced by my parents and nurtured by the family.

I did follow my interest in photography by working for ten years for a leading color photographer in Portland. My job as a lab tech involved the process of doing color separations, registration, dye transfer, color negatives, and mounted slides and prints. It was a wonderful world of exploration, though I never thought it would have an influence on my life and enrich it.

It was just a matter of time when my formal education in surface design, mixed media techniques, and designing for the textile industry would open a whole world of art and be a profound contribution to my creative journey.

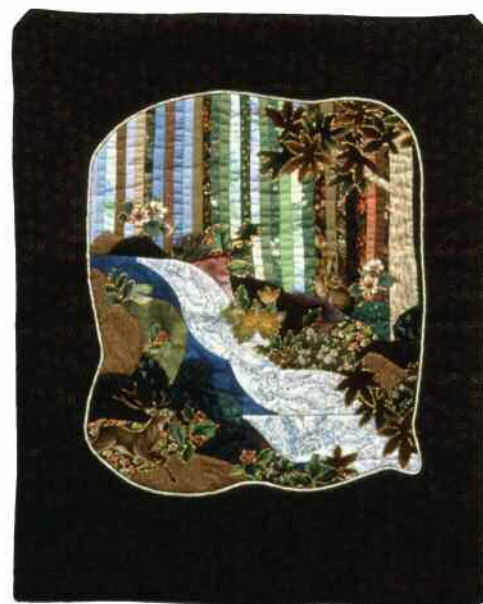
I continue to work with manufacturers, editors, and publishers, bringing their products to the consumer in quilts and clothing. For me, it's the challenge of an idea, the validation to do it, and the making it into a finished piece of art; whether for the wall, bed, or to be worn. It's a fulfilling process.

The subjects for my artwork might come from a dream, vision, a word; or the challenge of how to make light and shadow real, fracturing an image, the mystery of something hidden or behind, and using unusual surface treatments.

I do teach now and then; it's the human connection that I need once in awhile.



Nearly Spring
14" x 10" © 2006 Clairan Ferrono



A Special Place
23" x 19" © 1992 Patsy Moreland

Karin Franzen

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things. I also believe it's important to show on a regular basis. I get flooded with ideas, and I only have time to try a small number of them.

Committing to shows gets me to focus on a short-term specific goal and whatever set of ideas is appropriate to its accomplishment.

In 2008 I'll have a solo show at the International Gallery of Contemporary Art in Anchorage, Alaska. I'm planning a multimedia installation of translucent hanging panels that simulate an aspen grove, complimented by wall pieces that detail their seasonal relationship with leaf miner infestations.

In April of 2009 I'm scheduled for a solo show at the La Conner Quilt Museum in La Conner, Washington. I have yet to finalize the concept for that show, but it will certainly focus on my favorite subject, birds.

I'm also on the Visual Arts Committee of the Fairbanks Arts Associa-

tion. I'm involved with the planning and production of art exhibitions. It keeps me aware and connected with what's happening on the local art scene. Just being involved helps me get to know all kinds of people and leads to opportunities.

Keeping my artwork represented in the larger art community is of major importance to me. I watch for opportunities to collaborate with other artists who are working in other media as well as to submit to multimedia juried shows.

Publicity leads to name recognition and reinforces your reputation as an artist worthy of collecting. And of course, selling artwork helps to cover expenses. People ask me sometimes if it's difficult for me to let go of my artwork. My answer is, "No!" In fact, my first gallery show in 2003 sold out. Selling artwork prevents it from accumulating at home — it purges my space, clears my mind, and allows me

to keep moving forward. I find that the more my artwork is valued, the more incentive I feel to pull out all the stops and do the absolute best artwork I'm capable of. And that makes the artwork more valuable. It's an upward spiral.

As my artwork matures, it becomes more intricate, more complex, and more finished. A piece has to work on many levels. I like a strong overall graphic design with well-developed value patterns that reads well from a distance. But then it has to have layers of design that are more subtle so that as the viewer moves closer, there is more and more to look at. Having refined my construction methods, I'm now focusing more on improving my compositions and incorporating more abstraction into my designs. ▼

SAQA active member Karin Franzen lives in Fairbanks, Alaska.



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Congratulations to the 42 SAQA members who were juried into ArtQuilt Elements at the Wayne Art Center, April 4-May 10, 2008 in Wayne, PA. 68 quilts were selected from a pool of 706.

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Quilts: Past, Present & Future is a month-long celebration of the artistic and cultural signifi-

cance of quilts in our lives, honoring traditional, historical and contemporary art quilts.

The celebration begins the weekend of Sept. 4 with a 3-day conference and the opening reception of a juried Studio Art Quilt Association exhibit, **Amazing Art Quilts**, at the Staunton Augusta Art Center, Staunton, Virginia.

The QPPF Conference will include lectures from nationally known artists and scholars, as well as provide opportunities for quilt appraisals. Participants can enjoy an impressive array of special exhibits opening on the first weekend of September at numerous local galleries, which are participating in the month long event.

Contact Beth Young, Conference Coordinator, at quiltconf@ntelos.net.

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Scholarship

from page 9

up with wonder at the golden eagles proudly holding the fluttering stars-and-stripes flag (a common sight here and in the countryside) at the Waldorf Astoria, a wonderful example of 1930s Art Deco elegance on Park Avenue. The first landmark building Jeri took me to became my favourite — the Chrysler Building on Lexington Avenue, an Art Deco icon by William Van Alen, with its impressive metallic spire and its entrance foyer — a tribute to transportation.

The cityscape has inspired many quilters, SAQA member Beth Carney of Yonkers, New York, among them. Beth had her quilt, *Structured Chaos #14* juried into *Quilt National 2007*. When I met her at Jeri's potluck dinner, she had another one in progress which reminded me strongly of what I'd seen in the city — geometric shapes and light and dark shadows.

I had been led to believe that when travelling on the subway, eye contact

must be avoided. Well, forget it when you're with SAQA board member Lisa Chipetine. As a New York local, Lisa is fast talking and fast walking. On the subway, Lisa walked straight up to a young man and engaged him in conversation about his wonderfully de-constructed white jacket. Soon she

Quilters the world over are a lot of fun to be with.

had attracted several more people into discussion about the printed images and emblems on the jacket.

For lunch, Lisa took me to her favourite restaurant, Chez Josephine, run by Jean-Claude Baker, the adopted son of 1930s cabaret star Josephine Baker. After lobster salad and several glasses of wine, we hopped onto the subway, heading for South Street Seaport and the Bodies exhibition. However, we got lost and ended up on the Brooklyn Bridge, which Lisa had never walked across, so it was a first for us both.

The bridge, the world's first steel suspension bridge, with its Gothic arches and steel cables creating wonderful geometric patterns is a photographer's delight. Paula Nadelstern known for her kaleidoscopic designs has made a quilt to celebrate the bridge. Paula was also one of the QN 07 jurors and speakers at the SAQA Bridging the Gap: Quilt World to Art World conference.

Athens, home to the Dairy Barn and *Quilt National*, is a small, rural, university town in Ohio — a culture shock after the stimulation of New York. My amazing discovery was that people in the United States actively collect quilts. There is a species in the U.S. called the "quilt collector" — a rare bird known to attend SAQA con-

ferences and quilt exhibitions such as *QN* and, in a strange ritual, to exchange pieces of paper for pieces of stitched cloth. Collectors bought more than 10 of the *QN* quilts on the opening weekend. In the *Tales from the Collector's Side* luncheon, Jack Walsh told the story of how he became a collector and the connection he feels with both the quilt makers and the works that he has commissioned.

At the conference, SAQA's *Quilt in a Box*, a hand-crafted wooden box with a dozen pullout sections displaying 12-inch square quilts made by leading SAQA members, sold for \$10,000 after spirited bidding.

My own 12-inch square quilt, *Cloncurry Flinders Grass*, donated to the SAQA online auction and purchased by collector Del Thomas, is now in the Thomas Contemporary Quilt Collection.

The two workshop clusters of the conference were *Digital Technology* and *Marketing & Artistic Skills*. It was hard to choose two topics from the four on offer in each cluster, as they all sounded interesting.

However, my choices were *Using the Internet to Market Your Art* with Carolyn Lee Vehslage, *Technologically Wise Investments for Your Art* with Lisa Chipetine, and *Making the Leap to Professional Artist* with Susan Leslie Lumsden. While there was overlap between the topics, they all helped reinforce what we should be doing as professional art quilters. My other choice was a critique session with Sandra Sider.

What have I learned from the conference and experience of travelling to the States? Well, quilters the world over are a lot of fun to be with and we share a common bond and language. And New York is not such a scary place when you're with the right people. ▼

Sue Dennis is the SAQA Oceania representative. Her web site is www.suedennis.com. The Quilters' Guild of NSW Inc web site is www.quiltersguildnsw.com.



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On the cover:

***Echoes of Past Encounters*, 50" x 43", © Eileen Lauterborn**

Eileen says, "My quilts are an exploration of the rich visual properties of color and line that define, energize and animate the quilt surface. While working, images come and go and are informed by my emotions. This is an ever-changing process that is challenging, surprising, exciting and finally satisfying."

Echoes will be featured in ArtQuilt Elements, at the Wayne Art Center, April 4-May 10, 2008 in Wayne, PA. See more of Eileen's work on her web site, www.eileenlauterborn.com.

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Oceania – Sue Dennis (bsdennis@bigpond.com)

Quick Notes

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.

The *SAQA Journal* is published four times a year. Deadlines for articles are December 1st, March 1st, July 1st, and October 1st. E-mail articles to editor Carolyn Lee Vehslage at clvquilts@yahoo.com.

Books by SAQA members are now available in the SAQA store. To order, go to www.saqa.com > [saqa store](#)

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