

SAQA *Journal*

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Stills from a Life 24

Dominie Nash

see page 31

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Thoughts from the SAQA president

by Judith Content



As you read this summer report, please keep in mind that it was written in early February and winter still had its grips on much of the country. Here in Northern California,

those of us near San Francisco Bay were watching both the tides and rainfall, hoping the two wouldn't join forces again and make us switch from cars to kayaks. A little further north, where my daughter's future in-laws live, snow shut down Washington State University in Pullman, Washington, and classes were cancelled for the first time since Mt. St. Helens erupted in 1980. But February is a short month, the days are officially (if imperceptibly) getting longer, and spring is only 48 days away. Not that I'm counting!

I began planning my summer report several weeks ago. I knew I wanted to begin with a mention of my spur-of-the-moment trip to Colorado, where SAQA rep Susan Crouse-Kemp showed me true western hospitality. I travel a fair amount, and whenever possible I try to make connections with SAQA's members. For this trip, Susan organized a lovely lunch in downtown Boulder for several SAQA members.

Susan also reserved a room at the library and invited members of both SAQA and Front Range Contemporary Quilters to attend my presentation on working with galleries and museums. (A recorded version of this presentation is available online to all SAQA members.) In addition to professional concerns, I spoke about my contemporary approach to traditional shibori dye techniques and brought several examples of arashi-shibori silks — completely dyed but still wrapped up on plastic poles — to

unwrap and share with the audience. This demonstration went quite well, entirely thanks to Susan, who deftly grabbed my suitcase filled with notes, handouts, plastic poles, and dyed silks, before a Chinook wind threatened to send it flying into oncoming traffic.

During this visit, I was glad to learn more about the SAQA University project Susan is involved in. Over the last several months, I have been watching this fascinating project grow and develop under the leadership of Lisa Chipetine. Susan explained that Lisa's original idea focused on providing SAQA members with information in the areas of art, business & marketing, education, resources, and technology. A focus group was formed, and it was decided that a wiki would be the perfect means of sharing such information. Susan said, "The focus group put in a lot of hours trying to populate the wiki site and give it a start. The beauty of a wiki is that this initial burst of work will become a living document where all SAQA members can contribute their expertise. Anyone can edit, add new content, or just use the wiki as a wonderful repository of information."

Other exciting features of the wiki include discussion pages and a secondary site that allows groups to do on-line critiquing. In the critique area, SAQA members can upload an image of a piece they need assistance on, ask for help, and then invite feedback. This feature should be a valuable service for many of our members, particularly those members who live in remote locations.

The focus group evolved into an entire team of SAQA members who contributed to the design and creation of SAQA University. June Underwood wrote from a residency in icy Montana that "working together was tremendously exciting. I haven't

worked this hard on an 'intellectual' project in years, and I loved 'almost' every minute of it." She admired Lisa's ability to listen and hear criticism while remaining open, cheerful, and helpful. June added that Anne Copeland produced large amounts of text and acted as a reviewer for all entries. During crucial moments, Susan Crouse-Kemp assisted with technical problems, and Karen Asherman "put in more hours than I can bear thinking about standardizing the formatting and doing copy editing." June also emphasized that when Eileen Doughty "took hold of an area, we could all breathe easy. The problems we encountered setting up the wiki were all over the place, and Eileen excelled in all the challenging areas."

I hope that by the time this issue is in your mailbox, you will all have had an opportunity to explore the remarkable possibilities of SAQA University, our online repository uniquely designed to support art quilters and address the many challenges of being an artist. I hope that you will have played in the wiki "sandbox," so to speak, and become experts at extracting information, as well as contributing your own. The beauty of a wiki is that it is a communal undertaking in every sense of the word. With contributions from a membership as talented, experienced and creative as SAQA's, how could this project be anything less than fabulous? Thank you, Lisa, and your entire team of committed individuals for the gift of SAQA University.

And finally, the board welcomes our new member, Jacqueline (Jacquie) Atkins of Allentown, Pennsylvania. Jacquie is the textiles curator at the Allentown Art Museum and the author of *Quilting Transformed*. She also served briefly on the SAQA board many years ago and is thrilled to join us at this time.

Report from the SAQA executive director

by Martha Sielman



As I write this, SAQA is in the middle of a long-range visioning process. It's been a fascinating, exhilarating time as the board, the exhibition committee,

finance committee, ad hoc marketing and management committees, and the regional representatives have worked together to plan goals for SAQA to work towards, both during the next year and five years into the future.

In 2005, the board and I went on a three-day retreat, using the services of a professional facilitator to better define the mission and goals of the organization. Goals from that retreat included:

- Increasing membership numbers
- Improving the process for creating and mounting SAQA exhibitions
- Clarifying the criteria needed for PAM status

- Producing and distributing portfolio books of PAM work
- Improving the levels of donor and corporate support

Now that so many of those early goals have been achieved or even surpassed, it is time to again assess where SAQA is and where it should be headed.

SAQA will celebrate its 20th anniversary next year. Membership is rapidly approaching 2,000 — in fact, by the time you read this, we may have already reached that landmark. Members reside in 29 countries, and their expectations of what SAQA should offer vary widely. SAQA's accelerating growth demands a dynamic response.

Most of the brainstorming for this visioning process was done by conference call and email. One of the things that distinguishes SAQA is how much of our communication occurs long distance, yet the level of dedication, bonding and synergy is extremely high. The energy coming out of these brainstorming sessions was palpable,

and some of the ideas were adopted as soon as they were proposed:

I now have a part-time administrative assistant, Rita Hannafin, who is in charge of coordinating SAQA's traveling exhibitions, as well as planning for the next conference in May 2009.

The regional reps are convening in quarterly conference call meetings to share ideas and support.

We will be printing and distributing 5,000 copies of Portfolio 15, instead of only 1,500.

Many of the ideas will require help from more of our member volunteers, and many will require finding additional sources of financial support. But we now have a blueprint for the next year-and-a-half, as well as goals to aim for in the future. As is true with everything that SAQA has achieved in its almost 20 years, none of this would have been possible without the help of a huge number of dedicated volunteers, from board members to committee members to regional representatives. Thank you one and all — you are what makes SAQA successful.

Exhibition committee survey — January 2008

The survey invitation was emailed to 1792 members (active, PAMs, board members, reps, volunteer and student categories). 705 members responded — almost 40%

Forty percent of respondents said they had entered a SAQA exhibition in the past 4 years.

For the 60% who had not entered, the most common reason given was that they were unable to meet the deadline. The next was that they were new members and either were not prepared or were not members at the time of the call for entries. Theme restriction was the third reason.

Half of the shows entered were national. Regional and international split the other half.

The most preferred (81%) venue was a fine art venue such as art museum, art center, or commercial gallery. The second and third most preferred venues (almost equally) were university art galleries and quilt festivals in the U.S.

A small percentage (5%) expressed that their priorities for exhibiting were different from the options listed in the survey.

The kind of juror most preferred (57%) was a curator/director of a craft/art museum. Equally split preferences were for gallery owner/director, fiber artist, or artist from another medium — all at about 40% of respondents.

Additional comments listed art professor/art critic and multiple jurors that would include both fiber professionals and fine art professionals.

The majority (81%) preferred to submit individual images rather than a portfolio.

Compiling a portfolio (67%) and digital submissions (60%) were the areas most requested for training.

All areas for training/information listed on the survey received significant positive responses; 595 answered the question.

Additional comments included requests for training on approaching galleries/museums and improving submission materials.

Of the 705 respondents, 69% were active members, 27% were PAMs, 4% reps/volunteers/board/students.

Thank you to everyone who responded. Your input will help to guide the exhibition committee's planning for future exhibitions.

From the editor

by Carolyn Lee Vehslage, www.clvquilts.com



As a tester of the SAQA University wiki, I've experienced first hand how wonderful this information source is for our membership. One of the things I've

concentrated on is hot linking all of the articles, biographies, and reviews from all of the *Journals* and *Newsletters* dating back to our first one in September of 1991.

Carol Sara Schepps did an outstanding job testing to make sure each and every link to the over one hundred

articles goes to the appropriate issue — hard work, but it benefits us all. Other testers included Cathy Kleeman, Rosemary Claus-Gray, Connie Rohman, Cyndi Souder, Linda Colsh, Gwyned Trefethen, Louise Schiele, Leni Wiener, Kevan Rupp Lunney, Kathie Briggs, Carol Larson, Michelle Verbeeck, Marion Coleman, Gwen Magee, Jill Rumoshosky Werner, Desiree Vaughn, Sue Dennis, Anna Hergert, and Laura Wasilowski.

Now, SAQA members can look up any topic we need advice on and find several articles to select from. The links take us to a PDF for a particular *Journal* or *Newsletter* and then we can

scroll to the page of interest. Starting with the Winter 2008 *Journal* and moving both forward and slowly backwards to the Fall 2004 *Newsletter* when I took over as editor, I am going to create actual pages in the wiki for the articles, reviews, and biographies. That way, you will be able to search with keywords for any topic you would like.

SAQA University is a wonderful resource for us all, and I'm thrilled that all of our members now have access to 17 years and counting of excellent information covered in our past and future *Journals* and *Newsletters*.

Meet SAQA board member Jacquie Atkins



When I was 11 years old, I informed my parents that I needed a sewing machine so I could make my own clothes. Needless to say, I did not get one instantly, but I did

spend the summer learning how to sew. My parents, to their credit, decided this was not a passing fad and bought me a little Singer portable for my next birthday. I think that was the real start of my interest in textiles. When I grew up, I found an ideal first job in New York: as a copywriter for Montgomery Ward in the fabric department. I not only wrote about textiles, but could use the free samples!

The next step in my textile life was learning to weave, and that gave me an even greater appreciation for fibers and fabrics. Although a busy publishing career kept me away from weaving and fabrics, I tried never to miss a good textile exhibition. Eventually I

worked for the American Folk Art Museum on the New York Quilt Project—thousands of quilts to look at and an encyclopedic array of fabrics to study, encouraging me to write books and articles on quilt history. I also discovered Japanese textiles and quilts and returned to school for a master's degree in East Asian Studies. A Fulbright grant allowed me to live in Japan for a year, where I researched quilting and made personal and professional connections that still stand today.

Japan led to another project: a study of propaganda textiles, fabrics with designs representing the political face of a country in wartime. This research became my doctoral dissertation, a major exhibition, and a book, *Wearing Propaganda: Textiles on the Home Front in Japan, Britain, and the United States 1931-1945* (Yale University Press, 2005). It was also responsible for bringing me to the Allentown Art Museum, where I am now the Kate Fowler Merle Smith Curator of Textiles.

I continue to study and work with

quilts, from serving as a judge for the Japan Grand Prix Quilt contest to writing — my most recent book was *Quilting Transformed: Leaders in Contemporary Quilting in the United States* (Nihon Vogue Co., Ltd., 2007). I am looking forward to this opportunity to work with SAQA in supporting and expanding the dialogue between its many talented and creative members and the fine arts world.

Correction:

In "Working in a Series" (Spring 2008 SAQA Journal), the following paragraph incorrectly appeared near the conclusion of the article: "Are there recurring themes in my own work? Yes. Ditto for recurring design elements, and there are parallel tracks for groupings of colors. And there are probably underlying currents of which I am not aware. I just get tired of doing the same old, same old, and I get tired of seeing same old, same old from artists who work in series. With all respect for them and what works for them, for me as a viewer, the works tend to be repetitions, not something new to say. Clearly there are instances where there is a lot of exploring going on, but they seem to be the exception." These comments should have been attributed to Sarah Ann Smith.

A drawing group can revitalize your work

By Nancy Erickson

Bogged down? Bored? Need a bit of inspiration? Feeling out of the loop?

Here's an idea that might work for you: form a drawing group. You just need a space, some compatible artists, a set time, a bit of money, and an enthusiastic model or series of models. And you don't need to bring a sewing machine or complicated equipment for each session. Drawing is easy that way, or people can work in clay, in plaster, or whatever they please at the sessions.

The Pattee Canyon Ladies Salon has been meeting twice a month for about 18 years. Here's what we do:

Membership — Our members are artists and work independently in different media. We have ceramicists, mixed media people, painters, a nurse, a baker, and a couple of performance artists all working together. I'm the only person working in fabric. What is really important is to involve compatible people who don't mind sharing ideas and who can feel free to talk about all sorts of things without worrying that half of the city will know it all the next morning.

Money — We pay up front one year in advance; this is much simpler than dividing up each time. It's also an incentive to come if you've already paid, and relieves the money person of hassles and expense.

Location — The meeting place could be shared among the participants' studios. In our case, we almost always meet at my place because I have the space and the light. It's 15 minutes from town, and although our artists come from every direction in Missoula, so far this has been fine except in heavy snow, when I just cancel and start shoveling.

Models — We have an art department and dance program at the university nearby, so we can usually find models who are willing to come. Right now we pay \$40 for 2½ hours of

work, but this would vary in different parts of the country.

Exhibition — Each year in August we have an exhibition of our figure work (we exclude our other artwork) at the downtown building of one of our members. We have a grand opening, and we take turns sitting the space for three days or so. We split the costs for postcards, stamps, wine, a poster, and so on. Everyone usually sells something and gets to see and meet a lot of people in a few days. The last day, people come to pay and pick up their purchases and then the gallery distributes checks to each of us, subtracting 10% of sales for expenses. Recently we increased our mailing announcements to 1000, many of which we distribute to businesses around town to give away. So far, each person's costs have been under \$50 for the exhibition.

Men or no men — This question comes up every once in a while from guys who would like to join. So far our vote has been to keep it a women-only group. We tell men who ask that they should really form their own group. Wouldn't it be interesting to have shows at the same time, perhaps even the same models? How would the interpretations of the figure differ? But thus far, no other group has emerged.

Substitutes — We do add people temporarily when regulars can't come for a session. Substitutes have really enriched the group, from people in the community who just want to draw, to visiting artists at the university, to daughters of members. Visitors are free the first

time; then they pay \$5 per session, just as we do.

Drawing protocol — Because we're mostly working alone in our studios a lot of the time, we all welcome some human exchange, so we discuss things during sessions. If we didn't, what would happen to the person whose beloved dog died and she couldn't express her sorrow? So, we don't have a rule of silence.

We have coffee and teas and people may bring other items to eat if they wish; it is unscheduled and voluntary. Every now and then one person asks everyone for lunch or high tea, or we all meet at different places. It's great to be in unusual places to draw. As one of us, Janet Whaley, said, "Making is a life-long process of learning, developing, and experimenting for which I see drawing as a foundation."

Happy mark-making to you all! ▼

SAQA professional artist member Nancy Erickson lives in a mountain canyon near Missoula, Montana, with Ron, her partner of many years, and with the deer, cougars, and bears who have lived in the canyon for centuries. She has been making fabric constructions, quilts, paintings, and drawings since the 1960s. Her web site is www.nancyerickson.com.



Pleistocene Memory
78" x 74", © 2006 Nancy Erickson

Surviving the grant/fellowship application review process

By Gwendolyn Magee

In 2005, I successfully applied to the Mississippi Arts Commission for an artist fellowship. With this agency, the application review process is an open one, and artists are notified of the approximate time their artwork will be judged. Artists are given the option to observe the panel review process for as long or as short a period as they choose.

I decided to attend the full day's proceeding and was there from 8:30 a.m. when it started until they finished at 2:30 that afternoon. This was an eye-opening experience. While things may vary depending on the grantor agency, here are the things I observed and learned.

The jurying environment

There were three panelists. All were from out of state to minimize any chance of favoritism based on familiarity with the artwork or acquaintance with the artists.

There was absolutely no interaction allowed between observers and panelists. Panelists were supported by several Commission staff members who operated the slide and LED projectors, took copious notes about their comments, turned the lights on and off, collected the score sheets, and generally took care of any needs they had.

The disciplines reviewed were clay, photography, sculpture, painting, mixed media, printmaking, and fiber. Out of 31 artists who submitted applications, only two others chose to attend the review session. I was the only applicant who was there for the entire day.

Two weeks prior to the review session, panelists received copies of the artist narratives, descriptions of the processes used to create the artwork, and a CD of images for each artist. The panelists therefore had enough

lead time to seriously consider the artwork of each artist prior to the review session. They did not have to make snap judgments.

The review session started exactly on time. If I were to do this again, I would arrive 15 minutes earlier to hear the introductions of the panelists as well as to hear all of the instructions to the panel. Nonetheless, over the course of the day, I was able to learn that one of the panelists was an art professor and painter, one was the owner of a fine art gallery, and one was a professional crafts-person (clay).

Review process

This will vary from organization to organization, but it is probably a fairly standard process.

A document was provided listing the time scheduled for the review, the grant # (no names), the medium/discipline to be reviewed, and which

The panelists were looking to see a unified body of work, and it was a major factor in their judgment.

panelists were assigned to be the first and second readers. There was a rotation set up for who would comment first and second for each application. The first reader was the person identified as having the most expertise in

the specific medium being reviewed.

All of the slides for the artist whose artwork was under review were shown without comment in approximately five-second intervals. Once the last slide was shown, the first and second reader made their comments. The third panelist then added his or hers. The panelists were allowed to look again at any or all of the slides if they wished.

The awards were to be based on artistic excellence in three criteria: originality, vision, and technical mastery of the medium.

A Commission staff person served as a scribe, writing many notes about the strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions for improvement as they were made. These were to be provided to each applicant along with the award or non-award letter.

Panelists were not restricted in terms of having to make awards across the spectrum of disciplines, but were to focus on excellence — they were told that it would be “nice” to have awards made to artists working in different mediums, but if all of the best applications were from one medium; e.g., sculptors, then that would be how the fellowships should be awarded.

Major considerations for success

Follow the instructions. An application may not be considered if instructions are not followed. Don't submit a 5-page narrative when the limit is 2; don't submit 7 slides when the limit is 6.

Consistency, consistency, consistency! Over, and over, and over again, the presence or absence of this element in the artwork submitted was commented upon. The panelists were looking to see a unified body of work, and it was a major factor in their judgment. When they were not able

Not Tonight!

57 x 59 inches

© 2007 Gwendolyn Magee

Rifle aimed, a man crouches in the shadows of a darkened room. Refusing to be terrorized while cowering with fear, he stands ready to protect and defend to the death his home, his family and his manhood.

to perceive this as they reviewed an artist's slides, it was a very strong negative in terms of how they commented about and evaluated the work.

It was clear that many applicants thought they should show a broad range of capability. For example, one painter submitted a couple of landscapes (one was oil, the other was a watercolor), a couple of portraits (done in radically different styles), an abstract, and a still life. A sculptor submitted artwork that ranged from a loosely handled clay process to polymer to stone. This was a major

“Artwork has to transcend the medium to make it meaningful.”

mistake. Let me repeat — this was a major mistake!

The panelists were not interested in the breadth of the artists' work, but in the extent of its depth, mastery of the medium, and cohesiveness of concept.

Images: Quality of slides is critical. Some of the slides were horrid. The order in which you arrange your slides may be important. If possible, arrange them in some type of order that shows some sort of progression



or cohesiveness in the execution of your vision or concept.

If allowed, send slides instead of putting the artwork onto a CD. For this grant, artists were allowed the choice of submitting the work on slides or in CD format. However, when the CDs were shown with the LCD projector, the colors on the screen were not the same as the colors on the computer. In fact, they were so far off in some cases that the panel had to huddle around the laptop screen.

Vision: “Artwork has to transcend the medium to make it meaningful...” The panel wanted to see the artist's vision.

Following are a few of the comments made:

Photography applicant: “These are just standard cliché images about the South.”

Painting applicant: “It all seems to be mimicking a lot of other artwork — Warhol, for example.”

Mixed media applicant: “Quality of the pieces is extraordinary. The leather is transparent and has been

scraped very thin ... each character scene is complex and rich.”

Painting applicant: “Pieces all seem to be like investigations.”

Photography applicant: “There is a lot of strength in the understatement of the composition. This is a new perspective on the subject ... taking technology to the next level and making it into an art form. The conceptual imagery is very strong.”

Painting applicant: “These don't seem to be finished works, but are more like assignments done for a class.”

Printmaking applicant: “The artwork is technically strong, the presentation well done, and the exploration of images is very appealing, but the artist's use of text draws your attention away from the art. We should be able to understand the concept by looking at the piece. The words detract from the art.”

Sculpture applicant: “Very clever idea, but it's very academic and ultimately leaves you cold. The artwork is not layered — there is no richness in terms of meaning; it is what it is.”

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Grant/fellowship

from page 7

There is no soul — where is the relevance? It looks like something done by an MFA candidate. The message is discussed in the narrative, but what the artist is trying to portray doesn't come through in the artwork."

Sculpture applicant: "Very well crafted and a high degree of mastery. There is evidence of risk-taking and a strong sense of precision, but I don't find the artwork to be conceptually challenging."

There are many aspects of the grant application process that will not be within your control, so your focus must be on those that are. Be sure to:

- Apply only for grants that are a good fit with the scope of your artwork (for example, if your artwork is experimental, don't waste your time applying for grants whose focus is traditional);
- Follow every single detail of the application instructions to the letter, no matter how minor they seem to be;
- Ensure that your artwork is shown at its best by submitting top-quality images;
- Submit a comprehensive and unified body of work; and
- Write your narrative with passion and clarity. Panelists want to see and understand your vision. Do not assume that anything about your artwork is obvious or unimportant.

Finally, never pin all of your hopes on receiving any single grant, because there will always be far more applicants than there are awards to be distributed. Don't be disheartened by any single letter of non-award. There will always be other opportunities. Identify them, apply to them, and learn from them. ▼

*SAQA professional artist member
Gwendolyn Magee is a textile artist living in Jackson, Mississippi. Her web site is www.gwenmagee.com.*



photo by Peter Wintersteller

Helena Maria Viramontes (USA Ford Fellow), Susan Berresford (Chair, USA Board of Directors), Michael Sommers (USA Ford Fellow), and Gwendolyn Magee (USA Ford Fellow) at the USA Fellows celebration at Paramount Studios.

In the fall of 2007, Gwendolyn A. Magee received a United States Artists Fellowship Award. As a Ford Fellow, she received a \$50,000 grant to use without stipulation. She plans to use it "to purchase new equipment; for example, a laptop computer and LCD projector, and possibly a new sewing machine; for training to learn new skill sets; to upgrade my studio space; and for travel to Senegal and Gambia.

"The award money will help my artwork and career because it will provide the means by which I will no longer have to rely on others for my presentation equipment needs — it is way too stressful to set up and then discover that the provided PowerPoint software is not compatible with mine, or the projector is not adequate, or ... fill the blank."

You cannot apply for the award on your own. You have to be nominated for the award and are then "invited" to apply. Nominators are kept secret and you never learn who nominated you. However, once the awards are announced, you do learn who was on the panel that reviewed your application and made the recommendation to the board of directors.

Gwen first received an e-mail notifying her of the nomination with an invitation to apply. She says, "I was thrilled about the nomination itself, but frankly, I had no expectations beyond that and just thought that going through the application process would be a good exercise. I essentially forgot about it after it was submitted, all online.

"Notification that I was an award recipient initially came via a telephone call. I was stunned, to say the least. In fact, I was left speechless, not something typically associated with me."

She attended the award ceremony in Los Angeles at Paramount Studios. There's a specific page on the award web site for her:

<http://www.unitedstatesartists.org/Public/USAFellows2007/USAFellows2007/GwendolynMagee/index.cfm>

Developing a DVD

By Katie Pasquini Masopust

“We would like to do a video of you making your art quilts,” was the message on my answering machine from C&T Publishing, the publishing company that handles my books. Well I thought about it for a few days and decided that no one would want to sit around and watch me work in my studio. So I forgot about it and went on with my life.

A few weeks later I got the same message on my machine. They were being persistent! Maybe they knew something about the video world that I didn’t — after all, they’ve been doing this for a while. I decided to bite and called them back to get the details.

They told me that it was all very simple and they had everything in place with an excellent director and editor. Plus they would do all of the marketing and promotion. That sounded good to me.

My first step was to come up with an idea of what the video would be about. Then I had to create a script of what I would talk about and what shots would be needed. While I

waited for the director to call, I scratched a few things down. That right there sounds really odd — a director calling me?

The director was Jane Moxey, from the Seattle area, and she was delightful. She is originally from England and has a great accent and a very good sense of humor. She really knows her stuff about making a video. We went back and forth on the script several times. I sent her images of my quilts and pictures of my studio and living room. These things helped her to lay out the shoot.

I needed to have a piece to work on for the shoot. I created a fairly simple design of lilies done in a rainbow color scheme that would look good on television. I created it in five sections so I could have each section in a different construction stage.

The date was set for the actual shoot, and Jane flew in. The film crew was acquired from a managing house, a place that one can call to get top-notch camera and sound men in the area of the shoot. This saved the money of flying four people in to do

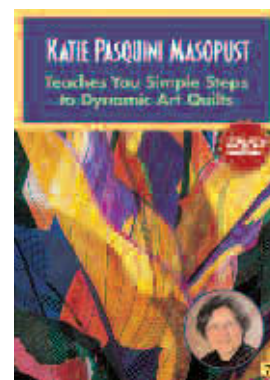
the shoot.

Before they arrived, I had to have all the tools needed for each shot as described in the script. For example, for Shot 1, we needed the photographs that I chose from for my inspiration image and the pen and acetate that I do my drawing on. So those items were set up on a table labeled Shot 1. For Shot 2, we needed the enlarged drawing, poster board, masking tape, etc.; these were set out on the table labeled Shot 2.

I hired Nicole Dunn, a quilting friend, to come and work with us. It was her job to make sure I had the right tools, that I didn’t say anything terribly wrong, and that my nose was powdered and I had lipstick on. That was the hardest part since I hardly ever wear lipstick, but I had to have it on for the whole video. Nicole also wrote the additional shots and took care of the clapper, that black-and-white wood thing that you snap when you say “Action!” Hey, this was the real deal. Action!

We had two days to shoot the whole video. Jane came over on

See “DVD” on page 28



Rainbow Lilies, 37 x 54 inches,
© 2007 Katie Pasquini Masopust,
and the cover of Katie’s new DVD.

Marion Coleman

Quilting came naturally to me, since our home was filled with quilts. My grandmother taught me to sew as a youngster. Although she did not quilt, I am from a family of quilters including my great-grandmother and several great aunts. One of them is 96 and still quilts. I didn't begin making quilts until approximately twenty years ago: I had always been more interested in making clothes, so that I could be in fashion within a budget, than in the quilts that my relatives made. However, as I saw contemporary quilts made with new fabrics, especially African fabrics, I became interested in giving quilting a try.

With advances in computer technology, I also became interested in putting images on fabric to record family stories. I made my first photo quilt for my mother's 70th birthday. I was hooked. I started to talk with my great aunts and began reading and collecting as many books about quilting, both traditional and art



Marion with *Hot Flash*, 46 x 39.5, © 2006, award winner in "By Hand," national contemporary craft exhibit at Bedford Gallery, Walnut Creek, California

quilts, as I could find. I made numerous bed quilts before I began to explore art quilting.

My art has certainly evolved. It is more complex than when I first began and I am much better at design concepts and layering. I was always pleased with my sense of color, but now I am working on being more adventurous in trying new techniques. Since I cannot draw, I use computer technology to help me make my art, particularly my digital camera and Photoshop™. I use a variety of materials, including sheers and "shiny stuff." For historic narrative artwork, I collect old linens and clothing, particularly aprons. I continue to love African fabrics and am presently working with African batiks. With these batiks, I am making color-driven abstract pieces. But I am equally fond of the West African prints that are great for character quilts with embellishments. I find it stimulating to create both representational and non-representational artwork and am producing artwork in at least four areas that include pictorial, narrative, African-themed, and abstract.

In 2003, I entered my first juried competition with the American Quilter's Society Quilt Exposition in Nashville, Tennessee. There was a call for entries for quilts about the Lewis and Clark expedition. I have always been interested in history and knew there was an African American on the

expedition. I created *Journey's Edge: York in the Corps of Discovery*. This piece was accepted into the show and was later exhibited twice at the Museum of the American Quilter's Society and other venues.

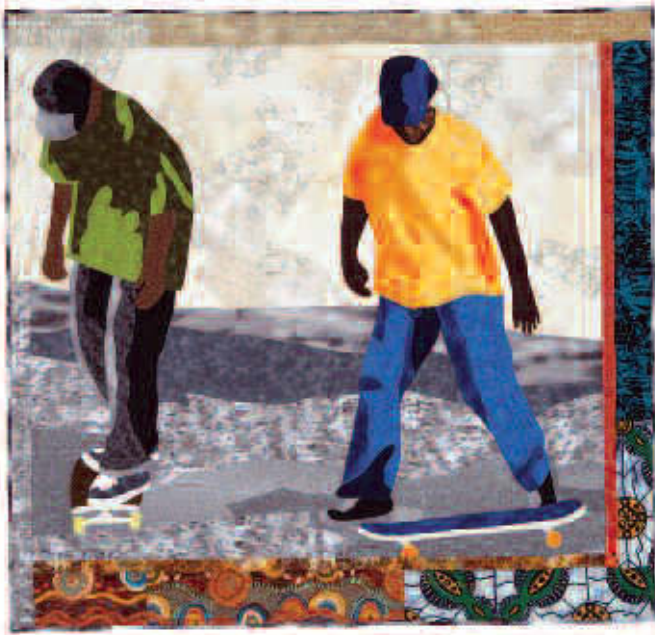
Afterwards I continued to enter shows and worked on improving my skills. During this process, I received support and critical evaluation from my husband, who never fails to give me his honest opinion along with helpful suggestions. My artwork has since been exhibited in Japan, France, South Africa, England, and Finland, and has been included in several books and journals. I have also won several awards.

In 2005, I submitted my first proposal for a public art project with the Alameda County Art Commission. I was commissioned to create four pieces that are now on display in the Juvenile Justice Center in San Leandro, California. This commission was a great professional success and has served as a gateway to two additional public art projects that I have recently been commissioned to complete. I will make four pieces for the Richmond, California Civic Center renovation project that should be completed by the end of 2008. I am also making two pieces for my local library that will open in 2009.

In 2008, I will have several pieces in exhibitions: I had a solo show at the Castro Valley Performing Art Center in February, my artwork will



Sister President, 39 x 31 inches, © 2007, opening at Afro-American American Museum, Wilberforce, Ohio, in March 2008 for Women's History Month.



Concrete Masters (left), 40 x 43 inches, © 2006, and *Swinging Together* (right), 46 x 48 inches, © 2006, both in the Alameda County Art Commission collection now on display at Juvenile Justice Center, San Leandro, California.

be exhibited at the Michigan State University Museum as part of their exhibition on human rights, two pieces are included in a touring exhibition that opened in March at Wilberforce University, and I have work on exhibit in the Craft and Cultural Gallery in the State of California building in Oakland. In May I'll be part of a group show at the Rocky Mountain Quilt Museum. I also have artwork included in SAQA's *Creative Force '07* exhibition that opened in Houston and is now on tour. Finally, I have two quilts on tour in the *Textural Rhythms* exhibition curated by Carolyn Mazloomi and included in the accompanying book.

I would say that I am product driven rather than process driven. I enjoy telling stories about my community and our world. My color quilts can just as easily present a mood or evoke a feeling as a pictorial quilt can tell a story. Sometimes they show how I'm feeling, what I'm exploring, or what looks right at a particular point in time. Making art is my passion and my job. I take it seriously and work diligently. I may stop working on an art project but then

return months later. Sometimes a rest is just what I need on a piece to have all the components come together. At other times, I am totally driven and I work until I have completely finished the artwork.

With my art, I draw on over twenty years experience in social services working with families and children. I have an MS in counseling. For public art, I focus on presenting pictorial imagery of individuals and families, and historic and community events. I am equally interested in other types of concept-driven quilts that present social issues from the past and present. Toward this end, I was awarded a Creative Work Fund grant in 2007 to collaborate with the Bay Area Black United Fund to create a series of quilts about African American health. These works will address diet, exercise, stress reduction, and various strategies that will help reduce heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and other symptoms of metabolic syndrome.

I am delighted to be able to continue my commitment to social services through art. Presently, I am teaching youngsters art at the Juvenile Justice Center. I am also

working on a community center public art project that involves seniors and youngsters that should be completed this summer.

My five-year plan is to continue to develop my skills, pursue more public art projects, and produce a calendar of my artwork. I would like to write an article for an art quilt publication. I plan to market my artwork more aggressively online and through galleries, and I am trying to decide whether to get an art representative. I currently spend approximately \$5,000 on my art quilt business, and this year has been my most financially successful year to date.

I am pleased to be invited to speak frequently on narrative quilts and on diversity in quilting. Through my guild and the Textile Arts Council of the deYoung Museum in San Francisco, I provide community outreach about textiles. I am a board member of the Council, and I also serve on the African American Advisory Committee of the Oakland Museum. Networking is essential in life, and community involvement keeps me informed about the work of

See "Marion Coleman" on page 29

Preparation meets opportunity

Google search results in major art buy

By Carol Larson

Preparation met opportunity for me late last year when I sold five pieces of my artwork to a prestigious philanthropic corporation in San Francisco.

As the Northern California-Nevada representative for SAQA, I am quite aware there are 165+ art quilters in our region, and those are just the SAQA members. I imagine that there are many more in California who are actively pursuing this passion for cloth, thread, dye, paint, and stitch. I feel incredibly fortunate that The James Irvine Foundation chose to purchase my artwork for installation in their corporate offices.

I was contacted by email in November by the finance officer of the Foundation. He wrote that he was interested in purchasing some of my artwork and asked how was it hung. Because I had read one too many Yahoo® lists, I immediately was suspicious of his intent. So I wrote back and briefly explained how I hang my artwork, and thanked him for his

interest, figuring I would never hear anything further. I decided to not ask how he found me at that point.

Meanwhile, I researched his company online, and determined that if it were a scam, he had gone to a great deal of trouble to appear to be the CFO of this foundation! Three weeks passed and a second e-mail arrived. He named specific pieces he wished to purchase, and asked for my phone number to discuss the matter. It was then that I asked him how he had found my artwork, and he responded, through my favorite art consultant, Monsieur Googlé!

The Foundation had recently finished renovation of an additional floor of their corporate offices in San Francisco's financial district. They had chosen to install fiber art to give a softer feel to an otherwise sterile environment; and because this non-profit serves the people of the state, they prefer to buy art by California artists. Further, the CFO was in somewhat of a rush to acquire the artwork, as he had an art acquisition budget for 2007 but not 2008, and the annual Foundation board meeting was two weeks off.

In one phone call, he chose the pieces. He was definite about four of them, sight unseen, and wished to select a fifth from three possibilities. We negotiated a price, with my giving him a 25% discount because of the multiple pieces. We set an appointment for me to

bring the artwork to San Francisco to audition and install.

I opened all of the artwork, checked labels and sleeves, and signed the back of each piece, should the label be lost. I rid my design table of clutter, and after pressing each artwork, laid it flat on the table to rest. Two of the pieces were so new, that I mentally let them go. Then I went on a planned five-day vacation to celebrate a big birthday.

Upon my return, I rolled the artwork into one giant jelly roll around a cardboard tube, where I inserted the hanging slats. I wrapped the entire parcel in cloth and set off for the city with a rolling bag of tools, invoices etc. I was both nervous and excited.

When I met the CFO, he immediately gave me a W-9 to complete for tax purposes, and a check for the first four pieces. Several staffers chose the fifth piece, and I left a prepared invoice. We hung the quilts. It was over and done with in less than an hour! A week later, the final payment arrived in the mail.

Three years ago, I took an HTML class through my local community college because I wanted to design a simple web site and maintain it. Shortly thereafter, I learned Dreamweaver and have continued to develop my web site. I frequently quip that the web site, like the artist, is a work in progress. My preparation in designing original and unique artwork, as well as creating a functional, uncluttered web site was a big factor in selling my artwork to the Foundation. Now whenever I feel that inevitable artistic slump, I remember that I sold five pieces of my artwork to a very prestigious philanthropic corporation. ▼

SAQA Northern California-Nevada representative Carol Larson lives in Petaluma, CA. Her web site is www.live2dye.com.



Persimmon

50 x 39 inches

© Carol Larson

Editor's Note: Another way to be prepared for that first sale or hundredth sale is to have a contract ready. Here is a sales agreement that SAQA members can modify to their own specific needs.

SALES AGREEMENT

Agreement made this _____ day of _____, _____, between _____ (hereinafter called "Artist"),
residing at _____, and _____ (hereinafter called "Purchaser"),
residing at _____.

1. DESCRIPTION OF WORK.

Title _____ Medium _____

Size _____ Year created _____

2. PAYMENT. The Artist shall sell the Work to the Purchaser, subject to the conditions herein, for a price of \$ _____ (dollars). The Purchaser shall also pay all applicable taxes.

3. INSURANCE, SHIPPING, AND INSTALLATION. The Artist agrees to keep the Work fully insured against fire and theft until delivery to the Purchaser. In the event of a loss caused by fire or theft, the Artist shall use the insurance proceeds to reimburse the making of the Work. The Work shall be shipped F.O.B. Artist's studio at the expense of the Purchaser to the address above.

4. ARTIST'S RIGHTS.

a. Copyright and Right to Credit. The Artist reserves all rights of reproduction and all copyright on the Work, the preliminary design, and any incidental works made in the creation of the Work. The Work may not be photographed, sketched, painted, or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without the express written consent of the Artist.

b. Right to Possession. The Artist and the Purchaser agree that the Artist shall have the right to show the Work for up to sixty (60) days once every five (5) years at no expense to the Purchaser, upon written notice not later than ninety (90) days before opening of show and upon satisfactory proof of insurance. All costs incurred from for delivery and return will be the responsibility of the Artist.

c. Non-destruction/Alteration. The Purchaser agrees that he/she will not intentionally destroy, alter, damage, modify, or otherwise change the Work in any way whatsoever.

d. Repairs/Maintenance. The Purchaser shall be responsible for the proper cleaning, maintenance, and protection of the Work in his/her possession, if on loan or otherwise exhibited, notwithstanding anything contrary herein. All repairs and restorations made during the Artist's lifetime shall have the Artist's written permission. The Artist shall be consulted as to his/her recommendations with regard to all such repairs and restorations, and will be given the opportunity to accomplish such repairs as he/she deems necessary.

e. Resale of Work. If the Purchaser sells or transfers the Work, the Purchaser shall pay to the Artist a sum equal to fifteen percent (15%) of the appreciated value of the work and shall obtain from the new purchaser or transferee a binding undertaking to observe all of the provisions of this Agreement in the interest of the Artist. The Artist shall be given the new owner's name and address. For the purposes of this agreement, appreciated value shall mean the sales price of the artwork less the original purchase price as stated in this agreement.

5. NOTICES AND CHANGES OF ADDRESS. All notices shall be sent to the addresses noted above. Each party shall give written notification within sixty (60) days of any changes of address.

6. NO ASSIGNMENT OR TRANSFER. Neither party hereto shall have the right to assign or transfer this agreement without the prior written consent of the other party.

7. HEIRS AND ASSIGNS. This agreement shall be binding upon the parties hereto, their heirs, successors, assigns, and personal representatives, and references to the Artist and the Purchaser shall include their heirs, successors, assigns, and personal representatives.

8. SEVERABILITY. If any part of this Agreement is held to be illegal, void, or unenforceable for any reason, such holding shall not affect the validity and enforceability of any other part.

9. GOVERNING LAWS. The validity of this agreement and of any of its terms, as well as the rights and duties of the parties under this agreement, shall be governed by the laws of the State of _____.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties have hereunto set their hands this day of _____, _____.

ARTIST _____ DATE _____

PURCHASER _____ DATE _____

Do you need an appraisal?

By Neva Hart and Bunnie Jordan, certified quilt appraisers

Are you thinking that only antique quilts need to be appraised? You might want to think again. If you exhibit your artwork or use commercial shippers, could you prove the value of your art if it were damaged or lost? Are your studio, your stash, and your photographic equipment covered by insurance?

For one artist last year, boxes of quilts were lost by the shipper en route to a museum for exhibition. The boxes were eventually located a long way from the intended destination, but not in time for the exhibition's opening. The show opened, but without featured works! Every so often, news about a shipper's truck that catches fire while en route to delivering quilts to a national show jams online chat lists. If these true stories make your heart stop, try making an insurance claim without an appraisal.

Claiming insured value on a shipper's form doesn't guarantee reimbursement. Insurance adjusters want proof and usually will not accept self-appraisals. While there is no guarantee that a professional appraisal will automatically get you a claim settlement, it will go a long way toward proving to an adjuster that your quilts are art and are expensive.

While insurance is the main reason to get an appraisal, there are other reasons quilt artists need appraisals.

What is an appraisal?

Accepted as a legal document, an appraisal is a statement of value of an item provided by a knowledgeable person. For your protection, an appraisal should be done by an expert in textiles who is up-to-date on current market prices for items like yours. Value is based on factors such as condition, craftsmanship, artistic concepts, and the artist's résumé. Generally, the dollar value an appraiser puts on your artwork is

what it would cost you to replace your quilt or get another like it in an open market.

Who needs an appraisal?

Do you donate and take a tax deduction? Do you sell your artwork? Do you ship or exhibit? Is your art insured outside of your possession? A "yes" to those questions, among others, means you could need an appraisal. Companies who insure homes and businesses will often require an expert appraisal to satisfy claims for loss or damage. Exhibit or show organizers request whether the declared value on your entry is supported by an appraisal. If you have to make a claim, many shippers will not honor self-appraisals for lost pack-

An appraisal is a statement of value of an item provided by a knowledgeable person.

ages, and require an expert appraisal to prove an item's worth. Appraisals are now required by the IRS for donated household goods worth more than \$500 for your tax return.

Giving artwork as a gift? Include an appraisal to fortify its worth. Estates and divorce settlements use appraisals to split valued property. But there are exceptions to these examples. Appraisers help you determine whether or not you need written proof.

Can I do it myself?

For the art quilter, an extensive sales record may provide sufficient evi-

dence of the value of your artwork. However, a third party involved (insurance company, IRS, or court of law) may want another opinion. Check with your tax adviser before getting an appraisal regarding reporting donations for tax deductions. When making a donation, quilt artists are often surprised and disappointed to learn that for tax purposes, donation value of quilts they have made themselves is limited to the cost of materials. Appraisers know when their services are required.

How much will it cost?

The appraiser may charge a set amount per item or charge by the hour. It is illegal for an appraiser to charge based on a percentage or total value of the items they appraise. Fees vary, but generally are under \$75 in most parts of the U.S.

Where can I find an appraiser?

Check the SAQA website for a list of quilt specialists or contact these major national groups for a professional near you:

The American Society of Appraisers
www.appraisers.org

The Professional Association of Appraisers — Quilted Textiles
www.quiltappraisers.org

The American Association of Appraisers
www.appraisersassoc.org

The International Society of Appraisers
www.isa-appraisers.org

We know lost quilts cannot be replaced, but an insurance settlement will at least get you some money back to start over. ▼

SAQA active members Neva Hart and Bunnie Jordan will be appraising at the regional conference "Quilts: Past, Present, and Future" in Staunton, Virginia, Sept. 5-6, 2008.

Trends in contemporary European quilt art

By Britta Ankenbauer

Translated from German to English by Julia Kastein. Originally published in the Swiss magazine *patCHquilt* No. 72, Spring 2007.

Close your eyes and think of the last quilt show you attended. Which contemporary quilt comes to mind? Was it one that was particularly beautiful, exceptional, ambiguous, or something else? The pieces that I remember are often the ones that caused the most fervent debates over traditional versus contemporary quilting.

Of course, I still remember the heated discussions caused by the bits of plastic bottles I had sewn onto my quilt *PET-chwork* (PET is the abbreviation for a common thermoplastic polymer used in many plastic beverage containers), which won a prize in a national quilt contest in Switzerland in 2004.

There was also much debate and many angry letters in response to Michael James' article in the French edition of *Magic Patch* (No 43, 2003). He had lamented the fact that in the contemporary quilt scene, one can find very little that is truly original, but more than enough copies.

In the past few years, there have been a number of important quilt events that have generated this type of discussion, and it is therefore worthwhile to think about the direction in which contemporary quilting is headed. Internationally, this question has been addressed in very different ways: a great reference book, *Art Quilts: A Celebration 400 Stunning Contemporary Designs*, a compendium of *Quilt National* catalogs from 1995 to 2003, with an introduction by Robert Shaw, was published in the U.S. last year (and reviewed in the last edition of *Patchwork Magazine*). Here in Switzerland, the diversity of con-

temporary quilting was highlighted in *Quiltmeer – a Sea of Quilts*, and in France, there have been several ambitious publications such as *Carrefour* and *Arttexture*. The Netherlands and Great Britain offer several large competitions, and in Germany, the Heidelberg Triennale gave rise to a debate on “stagnation on a high level” in Europe.

Can we even speak about international trends in quilting, or are the developments in different countries simply reflective of larger trends in contemporary art? Taking into account the developments in contemporary art in general often makes for an even more complicated picture. There are installations, media art, retro-painting, and media mix — anything goes, with a diverse mix of styles and materials. The definition remains vague. In one respect, contemporary art — and quilt art — is simply what exists in our time, created today. But that is certainly not a sufficient definition. Some say it is anything that touches a nerve, the one topic of our times. But what is that one nerve of our times? Or are there several? The term “avant garde” doesn't make much sense in today's fragmented yet globalized world, because there are many directions happening simultaneously in art, without one common course or sensational novelty. All of this shows the difficulty in attempting a clear statement; it is impossible to find a complete, clear-cut definition.

On the other hand, this is a situation that quilt artists have long experience with: to deal with individual fragments and pieces, to develop a



PET-chwork, 97 x 100 cm, ©2004 Britta Ankenbauer

series, and to use the scraps and leftovers to start something new. Maybe it's time for us to take a more differentiated approach to the term “contemporary quilt art” and to try and codify the many contemporary trends more precisely. Maybe the art quilt community, including the European art quilt community, has become so large that even though it is still all considered “textile art,” this textile art comprises so many different means of expression, that a more precise differentiation is necessary.

Looking at the many events and quilt exhibitions in recent years, a number of different categories become apparent which may provide a helpful way to guide discussion of contemporary quilt art. This is not an exhaustive list. And it will become obvious that a combination of these different trends can be found in some contemporary quilts and that some artists work with several different techniques in parallel.

See “Trends” on page 28

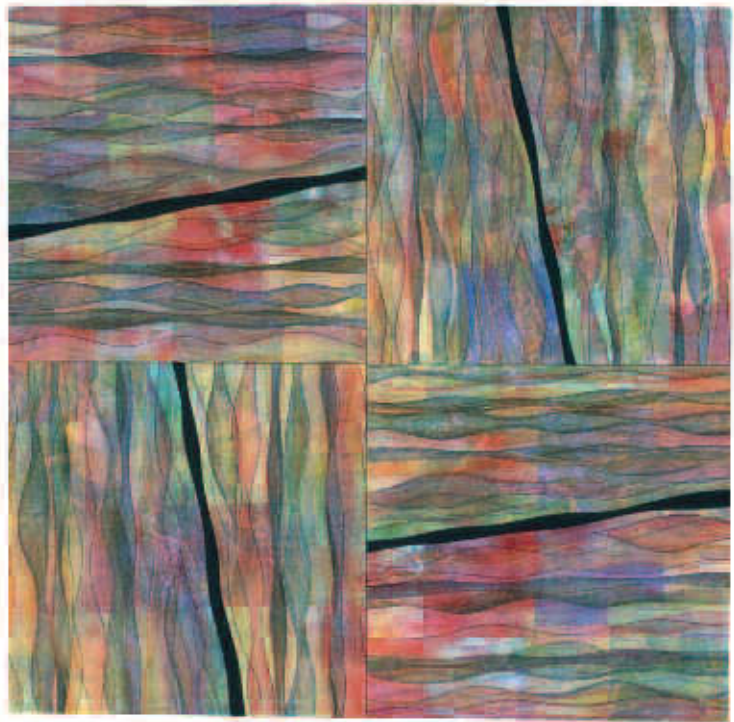
Deborah Gregory

Choices and Pathways VII

49" x 16" © 2007

www.deborah-gregory.com

This work was inspired by an image of the entrance to a beautiful trail near my house. I feel enveloped by Nature and its beauty once I have entered the trail. It is made of black cotton, discharged using netting and leaves as a resist, then overdyed and discharged again.



Nelda Warkentin

Iridescence

24" x 24" © 2007

www.neldawarkentin.com

This work is comprised of multiple layers of painted silk over cotton with linen accents. I used colored pencils to emphasize the shapes created by the quilting lines.



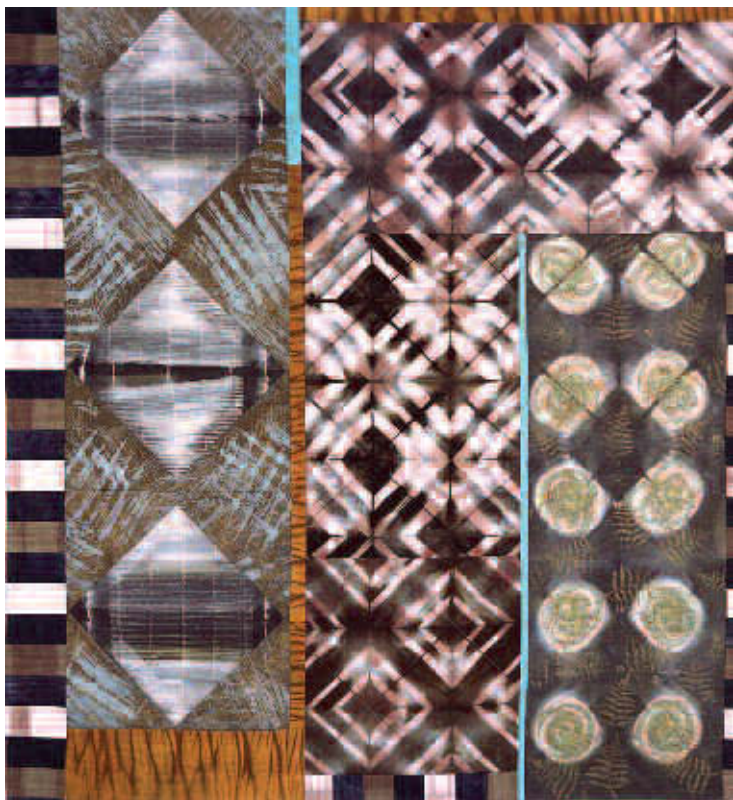
Bonnie J. Smith

View from Above

49" x 41" © 2008

www.bonniejofiberarts.com

My fiber art comes most from nature. There is so much inspiration in the world and the possibilities are endless. *View From Above*, I was initially inspired by waterways, but by the time I was finished with the project, it had taken on a life of its own and I was just the observer of the work. Hence its name.



Rosemary Hoffenberg

Haystack Phosphorescence

46 x 51" © 2007

www.rosemaryhoffenberg.com

Invariably the idea for any of my pieces starts with the fabric. When the composition is finished I search for a title evocative of what I'm looking at. The piece tells me what it wants to be called.



Terise Harrington

Mother Earth

23" x 14" © 2007

teriseharrington.com

My work is about ebb and flow — strict pattern intertwined with organic growth. The initial design and form begin with the palette of the fabric, which suggests a direction. Thread is used to augment, embellish, and alter the design surface. As I observe the piece take on a life of its own, I create the ebb and flow.



Kathie Cook

Portals IV – Piazza

47" x 35" © 2006

Piazza is the promise of finding an adventure when passing through a door.

Photography permission

By Martha Stamm Connell

Reprinted from the January 1994
SAQA Newsletter

During the 23 years we have owned and operated CONNELL GALLERY/Great American Gallery, we have become increasingly aware of potential problems that can arise from allowing artwork on exhibition to be photographed or from giving out slides, digitals, and photographs without good cause. Obviously, providing visual images to newspapers, magazines, and other appropriate publications that will properly identify the artwork and thereby gain recognition for the artist and the gallery is beneficial. And providing visual images to qualified designers and serious buyers can help sew up a sale. However, indiscriminate dispensing of slides or unchecked photography of the artwork can be harmful, particularly where studio art quilts are concerned.

With today's technology, it is simple to project an image and copy it precisely. Since traditional quilt patterns, designs, and techniques have been handed down from generation to generation and are freely reproduced in all kinds of publications, many quilters and most of the general public do not understand the difference between traditional quilts, which are in the public domain, and studio art quilts, which are unique, copyrightable creations. Copying the former is okay, but copying the latter is taboo.

We have banned photography in the gallery for the past twenty years, except for very specific situations that have to do with publicity and sales. We are careful to whom we give slides, photographs, and digital images, and we require that all be returned to us. We keep records of all loans, and if visuals are not returned within a reasonable period of time,

we contact the borrower.

In the course of working for the artists we represent, we often lend their artwork (with the artist's permission) for exhibition elsewhere. In connection with a specific loan, we were asked to grant permission for the artwork to be photographed. We realized that giving blanket permission for photography was not in the interest of either the artist or our gallery, so we devised a form that allows for photographing for publicity purposes only. We now include this form with the paperwork that accompanies the loan of any quilt.

Artists can easily amend this form for your use. We are happy to share it with each of you in the hope that it will help protect your special

quilts from being copied and will make exhibition curators, their staffs, and the general public more aware that your quilts are truly unique creations. We recommend that you overlay the copyright symbol and your name on your digital images of your artwork.

Please note that the form requests that all cameras be banned from the exhibition. I realize that quilters expect to be able to take photographs at quilt exhibitions, but I think this is a bad precedent. As an art quilter, you should have control of all images of your artwork. ▼

Former SAQA Board member Martha Stamm Connell is the owner of Connell Gallery/Great American Gallery in Atlanta, Georgia.

Photography Permission Form

The quilt(s) listed below is copyrighted material owned by the artist and may not be reproduced in any form without written permission. As agent for the artist, CONNELL GALLERY/Great American Gallery [substitute The Artist] grants the right for the listed quilts(s) to be photographed only for publicity purposes in connection with this [Name] exhibition – i.e., press releases by the exhibiting organization, newspaper and magazine articles, and art reviews. Any printed reproduction of the quilt(s) must include notice of copyright.

The quilt(s) may not be photographed or otherwise reproduced by any visitor to the exhibition without written permission, except as stated above. To avoid problems, please ban cameras from the exhibition area because many quilters and other people do not understand that artwork by studio art quilters are not in the public domain as are traditional quilt patterns, designs, and techniques.

Exhibition: _____

Quilts: _____

Martha Stamm Connell
Owner/Director
CONNELL GALLERY/
Great American Gallery

Quilt Exhibit Chairman

Date

Date

SAQA U: How to get started

By Kate Themel

W

hat the heck is a “wiki”?

Wiki: (pronounced “wick-ee”) origin: Hawaiian word for “fast.”

“A wiki is software that allows users to easily create, edit, and link pages together. Wikis are often used to create collaborative websites and to power community websites.”

Source: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki

If the name “wiki” is making you nervous, don’t be. SAQA-U (SAQA University) is a wiki, and it’s as easy to use as any ordinary web site or blog. You don’t need advanced computer skills or technical know-how to get the most out of SAQA-U. In fact, if you can search for fabric on line, you can use a wiki. Like any web site, it has links, navigation bars, and a search feature. However, unlike other web sites, a wiki is interactive. In other words, visitors to the site may *add* information as well as read it.

Log on to SAQA University

- SAQA-U can be accessed only by SAQA members. To enter the site, go to www.saqa.com.
- Click on the purple “SAQA U” tab at the top of SAQA’s home page.
- Click the drop-down tab “Members Only Access” and log on with your SAQA user name and password. This will bring you to the gateway to SAQA-U. Here you’ll find an introduction to the site, quick-reference guides, access to training videos, and a few helpful hints. Once you’ve read the introduction, you’re ready to go! Click “Proceed to SAQA-U.”

Accessing information

At the left of the home page, you’ll see several familiar links.

- Search box — allows you to search for a word or phrase within the wiki

- Information by category — for instance, you may click “Resources” to find information such as the names of galleries in your state.
- Ask a Question — if you can’t figure out how to find something or if you are having trouble with links, etc.
- Pages List – browse through this alphabetical list of all the pages in the wiki
- Training Videos — walks you through the features and allows you to see the wiki in action

The most important feature of a wiki is the collaborative process. You can now share your knowledge, tips, and techniques and have discussions with your peers by simply editing the pages or by creating new pages with new information.

Adding/changing information

Here are some features you won’t find on a typical web site:

- New Page — allows you to create a page and add it to the site.
- Edit Page — allows you to add or change the content of specific pages. (Note: some pages are locked to protect certain copyrights.)
- Recent Discussions — functions similarly to a blog or email discussion group. Members can participate in an ongoing discussion or start a new topic.

Give it a try!

The best way to learn what SAQA-U can do is to try it out. Afraid you’ll break something? Don’t be. Click



“Sandbox” and play around with all the editing features, worry-free. Whatever you do in the sandbox is temporary and will be removed later.

You can add text, photos, links, and post messages. Help is always accessible on the left side of every page by way of:

- FAQs & Help
- Ask a Question
- Report a Problem
- How to Contribute
- Training Videos
- Printable Guides

Log in and see all that SAQA-U has to offer. Once you’ve tried it, you’ll discover there are ways that you can contribute as well. Let’s share the wealth of knowledge that exists within the SAQA membership.

If nothing else, you may start using cool terms like “wiki” to impress your friends at parties. Enjoy! ▼

SAQA professional artist member Kate Themel lives in Cheshire, Connecticut. Her web site is www.square-one-design.com.

Focus on Fiber

By Mary McBride

Focus on Fiber is an annual gathering of artists spanning the fields of fiber including felting, hooking, quilting, painting, dyeing, and manipulation. There is no technique or material ignored as we bring together rug hookers, art quilters, and 3-D fiber artists for a retreat in the woods at Atlantic Center for the Arts. Artists work on original designs and share their knowledge as they dye and paint fabrics, collaborate on designs and structures, and learn techniques from one another. There is no formal instruction or format. Participants can work all day or night by themselves or in groups in a wooded facility in New Smyrna Beach, Florida. The event is self-directed and appeals to both novice and professional artists.

The Atlantic Center for the Arts is an idyllic setting for an artists' colony that provides five annual residential workshops for artists working with master artists in their chosen artistic field: literary, performance, or visual. Between the residencies, the campus facility is rented out to various retreat groups and events including weddings and opera workshops. There are 28 private rooms and three cabins, as well as assorted studios and galleries, surrounded by 58 acres of protected Florida landscape.

The Atlantic Center for the Arts supplies water, power, tables, chairs, and room to work. There are two wet studios, one large dry studio, and two smaller dry studios. It's possible to open the Black Box Theater as a fourth extra large dry studio if space is needed. There is also a digital studio, a library, and a gallery. Each artist has at least two 6- or 8-foot tables. There is outdoor water and a deep sink on one of the decks and lots of deck space to stretch out on.

Friends who live in different states come to be with each other, and

instructors come from all over to be able to play without the pressure of having to teach a class. Many are generous with their skills and provide demos in thermofaxing, printing, dyeing, batiking, hooking, and silk dyeing while they create. There are also those who allow us to try their sewing, felting, and embroidery machines. Last year, a local shop brought out two felting machines which we used and abused, breaking 14 needles as we tried out the machines.

During the first week of April 2008, we presented an evening lecture, *Fabric on the Table*, and an open discussion, *Fiber Futures*, which was open to the public, plus *OUTsideIN*, where the public was allowed to visit the studios to view artists' artwork. The public was not only interested in our fiber programs, but they purchased one-of-a-kind artworks. This year, a few instructors were featured in some downtown outreach programs for the community before the retreat began. There were also trips to museums, the beach, and local towns, which could not be ignored. Everyone was provided with a county map and a list of all the local thrift shops.

It was wonderful to see the artists interact and reach out to one another. Within hours, everyone seemed to be comfortably sharing their wisdom and entertaining stories. Though some artists started at the crack of dawn, some with power walks and others with their dye pots, by 4 p.m., most of them were gathered on the



Above: Laughing women: Mary McBride, Pamela Allen, Rosemary Claus-Gray, and Claire Fenton. We were like this most of the time, which inspired Pamela to make the quilt **Four Women Laughing Like Hell**, 47 x 35 inches (below).



cabin porches or in front of the commons (café) for drinks and stories. After dinner, prepared by our personal chef, it was back to the studios until eyes were too bleary to continue.

The Atlantic Center for the Arts is planning another retreat called Fall Focus on Fiber for October 5-11, 2008, and will have its annual *Focus on Fiber* next April 2009. ▼

SAQA Georgia/Florida representative Mary McBride is a quilt artist who lives in DeLand, Florida.

I have an idea — now what?

By Brett Barker

For some art quilters, ideas abound. Everywhere they turn, a faint spark, a nebulous creation flutters by. The problem for many is that these ideas often stop right there, because those ideas are forgotten as quickly as they came while life takes over (or for me, while my menopausal brain just spaces out!) So, how can you not only retain your great ideas but get them into a final piece, a fabulous art quilt? Here are some suggestions:

Carry a small notebook (no lined pages) in your purse or wallet. Yes, I'm certain you've heard this before. Although I'm an artist and art teacher, amazingly I resisted this concept, telling myself, "Oh, I'll remember that idea when I get back to my studio." Well, guess what? I hardly ever did. And if I did manage to retain an idea, I could never remember it exactly as it had first come into my head. I *finally* bought a very small blank book and am happy to say that I am now on my fifth purse-sized sketchbook. Try it.

As you sit in your studio without any ideas, get out your purse-sized sketchbook and go through it. I often combine a couple of sketches or ideas from this small book. I do this in a large sketchbook. I begin goofing around, making pencil sketches from the ideas in my small book. If I tell myself it's just play, I'm less likely to psych myself out. Playing takes the pressure off of creating art (a sometimes daunting concept!).

Here's the part that almost all artists resist at first: Do more than one large pencil sketch. I attribute this resistance to a left-brain/right-brain conflict. Your "thinking" brain often says, "Hey, you don't need to waste your time with all of this! You bought all this cool fabric, let's just start cutting! Don't worry, I'll help you think through it!" Wrong. Your

creative brain needs to engage right here, right now, *before* you start working with fabric in any way. This is crucial to creating an effective composition. If you can manage to do three or four sketches, you will find that your idea will refine itself without any conscious thought at all.

Many painters and other artists have shown how their ideas evolve through sketches. One of my favorite inspirational artists who created multiple sketches is Andrew Wyeth. He often did many pencil sketches, followed by watercolor studies, before

*Your creative brain
needs to engage
right here, right
now, before you
start working with
fabric in any way.*

beginning an oil painting. He, and other artists, almost never choose their first sketch as the one to finalize. Learn from this and try doing multiple sketches yourself.

After deciding on a sketch to be realized, you have some choices. My computer-free procedure entails making multiple photocopies of my final pencil sketch. I can then play with color and value by adding watercolor, markers, or pastels to the copies. I then put these different color sketches on my design wall. I often stop here for awhile. I go make lunch; I might even leave them up for a cou-

ple of days before deciding on my favorite color and value combination. Notice, I haven't even thought about fabric yet (although sometimes when I'm adding a color I'm doing so because I just bought a fat quarter of fabulous fabric in the very same shade — I can't help it). If I see things I like in more than one photocopy, I'll either combine them by creating yet another copy or I will cut out certain parts of one copy and glue them onto another. Now I have a final color sketch to begin translating into fabric.

If I choose to use the computer, my process is different. First, I scan the pencil sketch into the computer. I then use a paint program to fill different areas with color and value. I fill my areas with solid colors — I never choose patterned fills as this, again, moves me away from my "creative" brain and into my "thinking" brain. I do not use a quilting program at this time — it becomes too logical, too left-brained for me if I use these programs too soon. I will only use a quilting program as needed after I've created my final color sketch.

Now, at last, I can begin choosing fabric and threads based on my final color sketch. It is extremely rare that I will move away from any of the choices I have made when picking or piecing the fabric. I strongly believe that the creative "work" has already been done. Doing preliminary work through sketches allows me the freedom to create without stress—the hard part is done. I can now sit back, relax, and watch my idea realize itself in thread and fabric. ▼

SAQA member Brett Barker is a thread painter and art quilt teacher living in Santa Fe, New Mexico. She can be reached through her web site at www.brettbarkerart.com.

Framing art quilts: free versus fine finish

By Elizabeth Van Shaick

To frame, or not to frame: that is the question. Quilt artists who are ready to display and/or sell their artwork will confront this issue of final presentation. The previous article in this series outlined specific methods for mounting small art quilts. Here we move on to the topic of whether or not art quilts should be framed, and if so, how. No absolute rule can tell artists whether to frame, but discussing benefits and drawbacks allows us to make that final choice a purposeful one.

There are compelling reasons to display art quilts without frames in certain situations. Of course for larger pieces, framing a piece with glass may be cost prohibitive, and it also will be impractical if the artist will need to ship it. In the case of medium-small to very small art quilts, the artistic priorities and values behind the project and the final location the artist imagines the piece will inhabit should guide the decision. For example, small or medium-sized art quilts that are created in certain forms such as prayer flags, mandalas, healing talismans, or other items related to meditation or sacred practice will not have as much energy if framed.

When a piece is intended to hang in a specific location — think of very private comfortable spaces such as bedrooms or relaxing areas — leaving out the frames may be the most effective presentation. Many fiber artists feel it is more consistent with their aesthetic and with the historic legacy of fabric and thread work to display their quilts unframed. They prefer to try to advocate for the inclusion and respect of fiber/textile craft in its own form, rather than placing an art quilt into seemingly artificial boundaries or conventions associated with paintings.

Lenore Crawford says, “I would never put glass or plastic over a piece. It completely takes away from the

warmth and non-reflective quality of the fabric.” One cannot predict what the exact lighting and layout conditions will be in a gallery or exhibition space, and reflections and shadows that interfere with seeing the art are distracting. Glass or plexiglass in a frame does create a physical boundary separating the art piece from the viewer, so if intimacy, tactile aspects, or movement are important to the artist’s aims, or if there is extremely small detail in the quilt, avoiding a frame or glass may be the better choice.

Wendy Lugg tells the story of her relationship to framing and articulates the dilemma well: “I had always quite deliberately avoided matting or framing my wall quilts, even the small ones. Being stubborn, I decided to educate people to accept these works and their method of display rather than pretend they were something different. I have several colleagues who have for years framed their artwork under glass and avoided the use of the words ‘quilt’ or ‘textile’ (and who have sold very successfully!), in a deliberate ploy to have their artwork accepted as purchasable ‘art.’ It has worked well for them, but I’ve always avoided taking that path, because it seemed to do so would somehow be selling out, compromising my long-held ideals.”

However, she explains, her perspective shifted: “I was jolted out of my smug superior attitude recently by a colleague who works in a slightly different textile field. Her encouragement to consider framing several new pieces I was preparing for an upcoming show made me pause and catch my breath. It dawned on me that my intransigence on this issue was leading me astray, making me blind to what was, at least in this instance, aesthetically the best way to present the artwork. A little gnome in my

head had been mouthing the same words for some time, but I had been stubbornly refusing to give it voice.

“I was exhibiting the quilts alongside framed digital photographic prints. Both the quilts and prints were simple graphic images which spoke directly to each other. The 7 x 10-inch prints were professionally framed with off-white mats and simple black frames that increased their finished size to 16 x 20 inches. The 16-inch square quilts looked fine by themselves, and in different circumstances I might not have chosen to frame them. However, alongside the framed prints, they lost some of their impact. I made the decision to try various framing methods for the quilts and was very happy with the final result.”

What did she finally settle on to accent but not overwhelm the quilt pieces? A smart compromise:

“I chose black, 20-inch square frames, with narrow fronts but deep sides. After some experimentation, I found the best solution was to put the off-white mat against the backing board and to float the quilt in front of it, bringing the quilt surface forward almost to the same level as the front of the frame. I tried but rejected the use of glass, because aesthetically it diminished the artwork. I was surprised by how happy I was with the result. So I happily ate humble pie. Will I frame my small quilts in future? Not always, but yes, absolutely, when it is the best aesthetic choice, as it was in this instance.”

As Lugg’s journey shows, it is advantageous to do some experimenting with individual quilts and frames.

When does an artist need to frame an art quilt, or what are the best reasons to frame? Of course, if one is planning to hang work in a particular gallery or quilt exhibition, it is crucial to check the stated specifications or



Cherished Treasure #0016, 13 x 20, © 2007 Dena Crain



Jetty Suite 2, 20 x 20 (with frame), ©2007 Wendy Lugg

rules for the space or event. If the requirements are not explicit, it is wise to inquire because knowing the required format may affect the construction of the quilt itself and its final presentation — or the decision to enter at all. Gallerists who usually present traditional two-dimensional work may require art quilt makers to conform. This is not necessarily a bad thing. As British artist Margaret Cooter puts it, “Having the textile artwork framed means that people used to paintings immediately know what to do about hanging it. The framing makes the show organizers less wary of a ‘strange’ art form.”

On an aesthetic level, it might be easy for small art — trading-card size up to journal size, or ten inches square, to get lost in a display venue if it is unframed. When framed, it takes on a more noticeable physical presence and may tap into a greater sense of respect from viewers, potential buyers and curators.

Dena Crain lives in Kenya, and she says, “The little ones do need that extra punch given by a frame, unless you have a setting where you can hang half a dozen of them together as a collection. People here relate to anything in a frame as being a work of art. The standard idea of art is landscape, big game, or tribal portraits. Anything else is simply passed over as inconsequential and largely irrelevant.” On a practical level,

frames also offer significant protection from dirt, dust, damage, and theft. Where Dena lives, plastic wrap or frames are necessary to keep her pieces clean. Framing is often indispensable in situations where the artwork will be marketed in an open area or where a piece will hang in a public area or in an office where a lot of people will circulate close to it.

Another tangible benefit of framing is that the same piece in a frame can command a significantly higher price, well beyond the value of the frame itself. This is mostly because of the projection of the artist’s own respect and care for the piece and the buyer’s perception of it as a finished, hangable artwork worthy of notice. For example, a loose trading card or postcard-size art quilt might sell in the range of thirty to one hundred dollars, depending on the reputation of the artist. The same size works, framed, could bring two or three times that amount. (The third article in this series will address this pricing question.) A proper framing job can also boost a beginning artist’s presence.

The frame itself offers additional possibilities for juxtaposing colors, textures and motifs. Depending on the type and shape, the frame can be treated with paint, fabric, objects, or embellishments to enhance the image. Some artists who work with vintage images or materials have

extended their themes by framing their pieces on or inside vintage frames or other salvaged objects such as shutters.

Making very small versions of larger quilts and framing them may give an artist a whole new way to look at their visual language and work out concepts. When choosing to frame an art quilt, it is best not to simply fall back on the most neutral frame or the one that matches your own decorating taste. We don’t have to get seduced into expensive professional frames, either. Rather, first consider whether a standard shadowbox or customized frame best supports the message of the piece. High-end frames can certainly add elegance as well as importance to the presentation, but think about being open to the “least expensive ready-made frame that still makes the quilt look better than it would otherwise,” as Dena Crain puts it, as this will limit the expense. If a standard-style flat frame is your choice, note that the close contact of the layers of glass, matting and backing may be a problem for an art quilt, which could be between one eighth and three quarters of an inch in thickness. Choose a frame that allows for the thickness or insert tiny spacers into the corners of the frame to separate the glass from the surface of the quilt. Creating this space, doing the work in dry condi-

See “Framing” on page 30

Quilts: Past, Present & Future

By Pam Huggins

Through an extensive collaboration of artists, galleries, museums, businesses, and art organizations and advocates, a celebration of the historical, cultural, and artistic significance of the quilt will take place in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia throughout the month of September 2008. *Quilts: Past, Present & Future* consists of a multitude of regional events that will appeal not only to artists and those who make quilts, but also to collectors and the general public.

Quilts: Past, Present & Future began with an idea and a conversation. Martha Bruin Degen, a local artist and a SAQA regional co-representative, hosted an initial meeting to discuss the possibility of such a project. She obviously had them at "Hello!" because that first meeting produced the lion's share of committed participants, a list of other potential participants and partners, a title, date, and goals for the project. This group has continued to meet quarterly to plan the details of the budget, grant submissions, promotions, and the complicated logistics of coordinating such a widespread and diverse group of participants. The original goals have not changed, but the scope and diversity of the offerings have grown exponentially with the creative imaginations of the organizers.

A primary goal is to introduce the community to the art form of art quilts in today's fiber art milieu by creating a collaborative event that will bridge historic, traditional, and contemporary quilting audiences. Other goals are to provide the neighboring cities of Staunton, Waynesboro, Harrisonburg, and August counties with an exciting opportunity to come together, sharing resources and partnering for mutual benefit. These benefits include expanding the audience and support for each organi-

zation, museum, gallery, and art center, as well as increasing awareness about the area's growing tourism industry and attractions.

The celebration begins with opening weekend events September 5-7 that include a two-day conference hosted by the Staunton Augusta Art Center at the R.R. Smith Center for History and Art in historic downtown Staunton, Virginia. Beth Young, a professor of interior design at Mary Baldwin College, is the conference coordinator. She has worked with the other organizers to create a broad, hands-on experience featuring nationally known artists and scholars as lecturers and workshop instructors. Rachel Brown and Kay Shirey, owners

*...a celebration
of the historical,
cultural, and
artistic significance
of the quilt...*

of Rachel's Quilt Patch, a local quilting shop, and part of the original cadre of planners for QPP&F, are sponsors for the conference, which utilizes the wealth of local talent and SAQA educators and exhibitors.

A conference brochure and registration form are available on the SAQA website. The registration deadline for workshops is June 15. Tickets for lectures will likely be available beyond that date since the lectures can accommodate larger numbers. The



conference kicks off with the opening of over 14 exhibitions, gallery walks, workshops, lectures, quilt appraisals, production of *Quilters: the Musical*, and other month-long quilt experiences throughout the region, all sharing the common theme of the art of the quilt in its diverse forms and traditions.

The Staunton-Augusta Art Center has partnered with SAQA to sponsor a juried exhibition in their galleries of the R.R. Smith Center called *Amazing Art Quilts*. The goal of this exhibition is to amaze viewers with the range and scope of art quilts today. SAQA members from three regions that include and surround Virginia have been invited to participate. Through their partnership with the Staunton Augusta Art Center, The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts is providing the juror.

Learn more about this quilt celebration and the Central Shenandoah Valley community at the Staunton Convention and Visitors Bureau, P.O. Box 58, Staunton, VA 24402, 540.332.3865 or 1.800.342.7982, www.staunton.va.us/visitor. Contact Martha Bruin Degen, the *Quilts: Past, Present & Future* coordinator, at mdegen04@ntelos.net. ▼

Pam Huggins is a writer, retired college English professor, and member of the QPP&F committee.

Meet your regional representatives

Martha Bruin Degen

VA-NC-SC Co-Representative
www.marthabruinden.com



I have always loved textiles, color, making stuff, learning, current events, and psychology. Now that I am old enough to know and understand my

passions, I consciously seek opportunities to do what I love. The art quilt is a medium that allows me to marry my passions. Training as a graphic designer, an apprenticeship in printmaking, and an MFA degree in fibers with a focus on papermaking are some of the steps that have led me to where I am today. When I could not sew paper together successfully, I turned to fabric to express my concepts. I draw, print or dye my own fabric, work it two or three dimensionally and then assemble it with traditional quilting techniques.

During graduate school, I was fortunate to participate in a workshop with Faith Ringgold. I was already familiar with her paintings and children's book, *Tar Beach*. She was an excellent speaker and encouraging teacher. Since then, I have learned

more about Ms. Ringgold through her autobiography, art exhibits, and lectures. I have used her children's books in the classes I taught. At the time, I did not realize the impact she had on me, but as I reflect years later, I see what a role model and inspiration she has been and continues to be for me. Ms. Ringgold did not allow early rejection or discouragement to keep her from her creativity goals. She remained true to herself and trusted that the rest of the world would come around to valuing her perspective.

I am grateful to Ms. Ringgold and to all the artists (many of them SAQA members) who were the pioneers of the art quilt movement.

Jill Jensen

VA-NC-SC Co-Representative



While taking a papermaking class at the Arrowmont School for Arts and Crafts, I walked into the other studios to see what else was being

created. It was in Elizabeth Busch's class that I saw my first art quilts. I decided that if she came back to teach

that class, I would take it. So two years later in June 1998, I had my first experience with surface design and making art quilts, or any quilt for that matter. I have found that I can incorporate the various media that I had used as a fine artist and combine them into one piece of art. I paint all of my fabrics; I design, carve and print both relief prints and intaglio prints onto the fabric, and I draw on the fabric with pencils, pastels, and Caran d'Ache crayons. It is very satisfying to watch white fabric transform into a vibrantly colored piece of art. The texture and color added by the quilting lines or embroidery stitches continue to enchant me, and so I continue to create art quilts instead of traditional paintings.

This year I have two solo shows in addition to teaching printmaking as an artist in residence through the Virginia Commission for the Arts. My studio is located in my home; that best fits the way that I schedule my studio time. I have the pleasure of working with my co-rep Martha Bruin Degen who is a friend and co-member of Fiber Transformed, a group of fiber artists in Central Virginia. We continue to look for show opportunities for our region and each fall we have a meeting or conference for our region.

See "Regional reps" on page 26



The Katrina Quilt, 70" x 84" (detail)
© 2006 Martha Bruin Degen



Forest Fire, 30" x 30", © 2006 Jill Jensen

Jennifer Conrad

PA, MD, DC & WV Representative



My introduction to the art quilt world came from a desire to learn how to take my paintings from canvas and reinterpret them in fabric. I grew up in a very small

town in western Minnesota, where there was a lot of time to be creative. I had five years of home economics and as many art classes as I could take in high school. My desire to be an art major was strong. I told my father I wanted to attend the Art Institute in Chicago, and he said, "No way." Instead, I completed a B.A. in communications with an emphasis on public speaking.

The art bug never left me. My grandfather was my mentor from the time I was three until he died when I was 20. I was his biggest fan, and he was my biggest supporter. He will always be an inspiration and a part of my creativity.

I started taking classes in Minnesota

from Sue Stein in the early 90s, and then I made the big move to the east coast and settled in Maryland in 1997. It has opened up a new world to me, and my appreciation of art quilting really took off. I started taking classes at a local quilt store; however, they were teaching traditional block construction. I hated it! I think the problem was that my first quilt was a hand-tied polyester lap quilt. That would turn anybody off.

Fortunately, I persisted with my paintings, and the desire to recreate my visions in textiles has become a very happy marriage.

Color has always driven my creativity and graphic boldness catches my eye. I continue to draw from my paintings, which are usually two-dimensional. My subject matter is typically flowers and geometric patterns. As long as I have a great big palette to play with, I am emotionally and spiritually satisfied.

Katie Pasquini Masopust came to a guild in Maryland, and I was so blown away by her artwork. Katie inspired me, and I look to her as a mentor. She is an awesome teacher and has inspired me to be a better art quilter. She has given me direction in where I

want to go as a professional. I had the pleasure to attend two of her Alegre Retreats in Santa Fe.

I am thrilled to be a part of SAQA, and my personal goal is to keep learning and be a resource to others. I am new to the representative role and will be seeking advice and council from our experts, but I am eager and want to help others discover the satisfaction of the art quilt world. Life is too short not to love what you do!

Connie Rohman

Southern California Co-Rep
www.connierohman.com

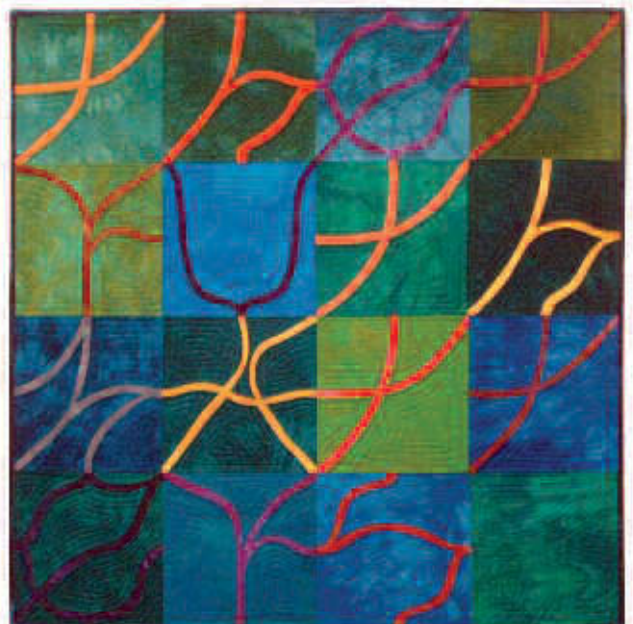


My love of fabric and making things by hand was fostered by my childhood in Canada where I grew up in an intentional Quaker community in

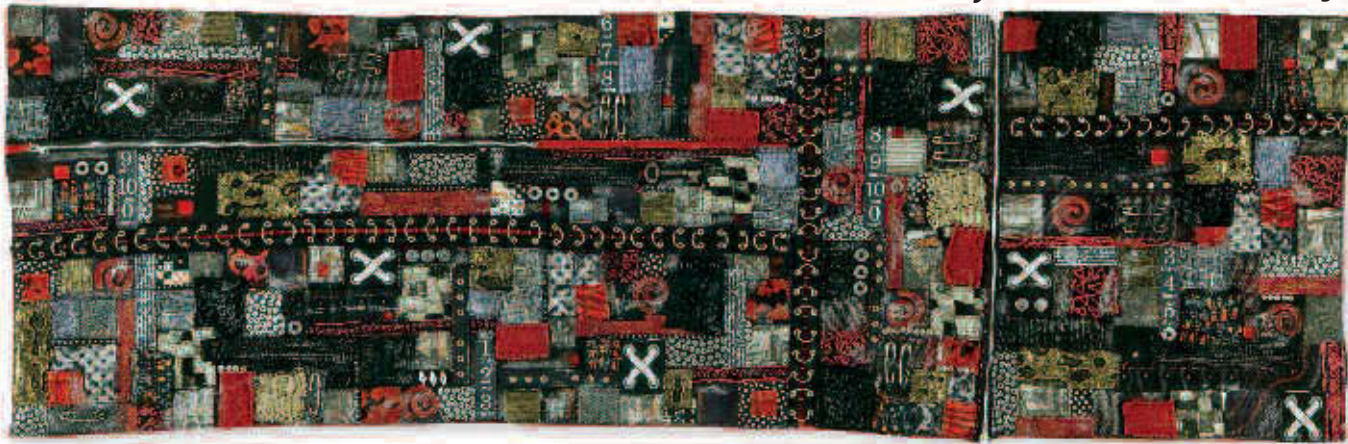
rural British Columbia, by a lake in the foothills to the Rocky Mountains. The beauty of that landscape continues to inspire and inform my artwork to this day.



Bird's Eye View, 33" x 38" © 2007 Jennifer Conrad



Truth Matters, 32" x 32" © 2005 Connie Rohman

Heavy Metal 2, 20" x 61", © Jamie Fingal

Until I was seven, we had no electricity. We used wood heat and cooked on a wood stove; I learned to sew on my Quaker grandmother's treadle machine. After high school, I studied linguistics at college and went on a year long exchange program to Malaysia. Years later, after working as an ESL teacher and community organizer, I found myself married, living in Los Angeles, and working in film and television. Eventually, I left that career to stay home with my kids, and one day I was asked to help make a raffle quilt for my daughter's coop nursery school. It was then I remembered how much I loved working with fabric, and I have been doing that ever since.

In my recent artwork, I continue to explore line and meaning in my Line/Language series, incorporating my love of language and the printed word. I create abstracts and landscapes using found fabrics and my own hand-dyed fabrics. My interest in Judaica has led me to designing tallitot (jewish prayer shawls) and Torah mantles.

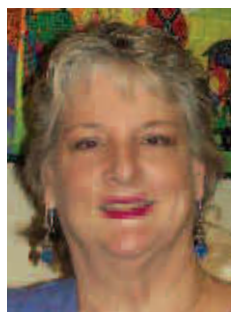
My life now is spent working as a studio fiber artist, traveling with my husband for his international human rights work, and volunteering for SAQA, Surface Design Association, and my local neighborhood council.

As for volunteering, I find that it gives me back much more than I put in. I have met wonderful people through SAQA, and have found multiple ways to enrich my artistic life and art career through this great

organization. As the new co-rep for our Southern California region, I have several goals for the upcoming year. I am lucky to have the talented, smart, and incredibly organized Jamie Fingal as my co-rep. We would like to bring a sense of community to our wide-flung members by holding several local meetings as well as regional gatherings. We hope to have more exhibitions and to continue facilitating the dialogue among our Southern California members. Fiber arts are gaining more interest in the fine arts world, and SAQA is poised to be a major institution supporting artists working in this medium. I am happy to be a part of this group, and I look forward to meeting fellow SAQA members as we move forward.

Jamie Fingal

Southern California Co-Rep
www.jamiefingal.com
jamiefingaldesigns.blogspot.com/



decoupage with fabric and photography are just some of the mediums that I still enjoy creating. I have sold

my artwork in galleries and fine art shows. I began making quilts in the 80s and took the leap to art quilts in 2000 by learning the technique of fusing. I am a full-time studio artist and have a marvelous place to work and create my one-of-a-kind pieces. I have a passion for bright colors with a touch of whimsy, from abstract to pictorial. I love assemblage art, and try to translate that medium into fabric through my shrine series. Working from my soulful dark side has brought me to a new level in my art. Using a variety of materials from cottons to packing material, metal washers to belt buckles, I find every piece is a challenge to see how far I can go with this medium.

I am the founder of Cut-Loose Quilters of Orange, a small art group. We have made collaboration quilts that I designed that are on permanent display in our local library. The main art quilt is 14 feet wide.

My book, *Embellished Mini Quilts*, was published in October of 2007. It features not only my artwork, but pieces from eleven contributing artists. I am a firm believer in giving back and donate my time and talents to the Girl Scout Council of Orange County, Fiberarts Connection of Southern California, and now to SAQA. I am quite excited about all the wonderful opportunities that SAQA has to offer its members. Imagine the possibilities of what we could do in Southern California with the tools that we have been given!

Friday for a few hours to see the house and studio layout and to go over the script with me to make sure that I had everything in order. We didn't rehearse because I didn't think I needed to. I wanted to be spontaneous, but as I look back on it now, a rehearsal might have been a good thing. I was a bit nervous. Hindsight is everything, isn't it?

Saturday morning they all showed up around 9 a.m. — Jane, Nicole, two camera guys, a sound man, lots of lights, cords, and stuff.

First we shot the introduction, where I welcome everyone at my door. It's supposed to look as if my best friend has come to spend the day with me. I show her around my living room and into my studio. This is where I give a studio tour showing all of my favorite things from fabric to sewing machine to scissors. Then I go over the images I'm choosing from,

showing how I do my drawing, make my pattern, cut the fabric, turn the edges, sew it all down, quilt it, and finish it.

It was lots and lots of talking! And the hardest part is looking at the big black round lens of the camera as if it were this very dear friend of mine, and, oh yes, smiling while you are talking. Try it; it's not as easy as you might think.

It all went pretty smoothly except for the sound. If there was any sound from outside, like planes flying overhead, birds chirping, or bees buzzing, we would have to stop until everything quieted down. It was a hot day and we did an interview outside on my back porch. My dogs were breathing too heavily. More stops. Of course there was also a lot of stopping for powdering my nose and reapplying my lipstick!

We finished almost everything on

the first day. Then Jane took the entire tape home and edited it. The head camera guy came back a couple of weeks later to go over a few shots that Jane felt we needed and to photograph the finished quilt. So all in all, about 14 hours of time, not including the editing. Not too bad for a 75-minute video.

I never would have believed it, but it's selling pretty well. People who have taken my classes have written to me saying that it's very helpful to review what I was showing in class. It helps them to remember the order and some of the steps. Others say that they think they can try my technique from the instructions.

Overall, a very fun experience! ▼

Former SAQA president Katie Pasquini Masopust is a studio art quilter, author, teacher, and lecturer. Her studio is in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and her web site is www.katiepm.com.

Trends from page 15

Surface design as an extension of artistic expression. Dyeing, painting, and patchwork with different materials, as demonstrated in the shows organized by Dörte Bach. Participants are asked specifically to be creative in their use of techniques. Frequently, this can mean doing without the so-called "third layer," i.e., the fleece lining (batting).

The use of new media. Text and photos become meaningful and integral parts of the quilt through the use of computers, digital cameras, printers, etc., as demonstrated in the work of Verena Matter.

Three-dimensional artwork. At the *Carrefour du Patchwork* in Val d'Argent, France, quilted objects such as bowls and tea cups were on display and many of the quilts sent into the competition were also three-dimensional. The quilts of Mariana Frühauf are exemplary of this trend.

Crossing boundaries. Other techniques in textile art, such as embroi-

dery, weaving, knitting, painting, paper collage etc. are incorporated into quilts and the boundaries between these different techniques are blurred. These incorporated techniques are not used in a pure sense but are worked into the piece with stitches that are typical of quilts. There are countless examples of crossing boundaries; possibly two of the most outstanding artists are Miryam Tripet and Gabi Mett.

Reflections on current issues. Different topics dominating public debate are central to the quilt. Techniques, material and design are chosen specifically to enhance the message. Because the message is of primary importance, the means of artistic expression becomes secondary, and these quilts are often created with the simplest techniques, such as plain rectangles in a row.

Personal style, individual art, Art Singulaire. These are quilts that express the distinctive individual

style of the artist. The nuances, developments, and artistic process show in the work. Solo shows by these artists, reflecting their progress over several years, are especially fascinating. One example is Léa Stansal, whose mix of pop-art and fairytale-like installations is charmingly unique. Artists such as Marianne Häni, Ursula König and Beatrice Lanter also belong in this category.

This attempt to create different categories of contemporary quilt art should only be the beginning of a dialogue about this concept. It is still an open question whether quilt art will continue to be so popular and so diverse, or whether quilts will eventually be replaced by other textile media. My guess is that the multifaceted abundance of quilt art is here to stay, and that both traditional and contemporary quilts will continue to amaze and to be admired. ▼

SAQA active member Britta Ankenbauer is from Leipzig, Germany. Her web site is www.britta-ankenbauer.com.

Marion Coleman from page 11

others and trends in art, plus I meet so many interesting and creative people. I am very thankful to Liz Berg, who generously shared her time and introduced me to books, materials, and techniques. Patricia Montgomery introduced me to public art and continues to provide information on a variety of topics. Carolyn Mazloomi is a new mentor who has a wealth of knowledge that she generously shares.

All of the members of the African American Quilt Guild of Oakland provide ongoing encouragement. Participation in California Fiber Artists has allowed me to expand my exhibition opportunities. Members of the African American Art Quilts Yahoo!™ group continue to expand my art circle, and I thank them all for many years of encouragement. And, of course, the members of the Northern California region of SAQA are a continuing source of inspiration and support. ▼

SAQA active member Marion Coleman is a quilt artist living in Castro Valley, Calif. Her web site is www.marioncoleman.com.



Rashida, 42 x 32 inches, 2006, exhibited in Finland 2007 and image shown in local paper as part of California Fiber Artist exhibit; now at Richmond Art Center.

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Framing

from page 23

tions, and sealing the back of the frame well will prevent moisture problems that might damage the quilt. The quilt can be placed behind the opening of a mat or mounted to the front of a mat. The quilt can be mounted with stitching or Velcro® and can be floated off the back surface by placing a cutout of felt or foamcore behind it.

Shadowbox frames provide some flexibility that flat ones don't. A shallow frame 2-3 inches larger than the piece on each side allows room for an attractive mounting as well as a signature on the mat. But a deeper box may allow for more unusual suspension techniques and viewing perspectives. Unconventional frames with hinged fronts, small cabinets, and niches are still more options.

I made a set of four small quilts based on photographs of scenes in Philadelphia and New York City, and I mounted them directly on plywood, cork and textured metal backgrounds

and framed them in simple square black frames. To get the benefit of the frame but avoid difficulties with glass, backing and securing hardware, one can simply omit those layers and stitch the finished quilt to the inside or back of the frame. The size of the frame and the space between the frame and the quilt edge will determine how "suspended" the quilt appears.

For more instructions on specific framing techniques, see "Picture It Framed" by Lyric Kinard in the February/March 2008 issue of *Quilting Arts Magazine*.

Many standard and unusual frames are available from Michaels, Jo-Ann Fabric and Craft, Ikea, Target, Homegoods, AmericanFrame.com, DickBlick.com, JerrysArtarama.com, LightImpressionsDirect.com, and pfile.com, to name just a few. ▼

SAQA active member Elizabeth Van Shaick is a fiber artist and jeweler. She lives in Wayne, Pennsylvania, and her web site is www.elizabethvs.com.



South 1st Street, Brooklyn

12 x 12 (with frame)

© 2005 Elizabeth Van Shaick

Inkjet print of photograph on cotton fabric, quilted, matted with corrugated metal and framed in simple black frame.

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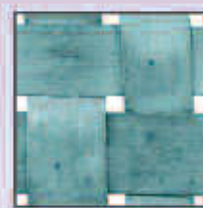
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On the cover:

Stills from a Life 24, 40"x 60", © Dominie Nash

Dominie says, "It's surprising to look at familiar objects in a new context, such as setting up a still life composition. Often the homeliest or most ordinary things have the most interesting shapes and patterns when abstracted and made to interact with each other. The challenge of exploring and developing these relationships into a satisfying arrangement, and then translating it into fabric on a 2-dimensional plane, keeps me interested in pursuing this series."

Stills From a Life 24 is part of the *Transformations 08: Icons & Imagery* exhibition premiering August 14, 2008 at the Festival of Quilts in Birmingham, England.

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