

SAQQA *Journal*

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I Want to Stitch

by Bethan Ash

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Thoughts from the SAQA president

by Judith Content



I have just returned from a whirlwind week in Santa Fe, New Mexico. I was there to speak at *Silk in Santa Fe*, the biennial Silk Painters International (SPIN)

Conference. I gave a lecture entitled *The Artist's Path*, on the highlights of my thirty years exploring shibori-dyed silk. While in Santa Fe, I also arranged a number of meetings and events focusing on outreach for SAQA.

I want to thank SAQA's New Mexico rep, Pat Gould, for organizing a regional meeting in the atrium of the Museum of International Folk Art up on Museum Hill. I was very impressed with the quality of work the New Mexico members brought to

the regional meeting and excited to see several "squares" destined for the SAQA auction.

As the week flew by, I had many opportunities to network on behalf of SAQA. I attended the reception for *Extreme Baskets* at Jane Sauer's gallery on Canyon Road and spoke with Jane for quite a while.

While in Santa Fe, I arranged to meet with Dr. Joyce Ice, the executive director of the Museum of International Folk Art. My intent is to familiarize museum directors, curators, and collections managers with SAQA, and ideally to lay the groundwork for future collaborations and interactions. My meeting with Dr. Ice was very successful. It turns out we have many mutual friends, including Jane Przybysz, director of the San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles,

and Linda Craighead, director of the Palo Alto Art Center. I left Dr. Ice with a collection of SAQA *Journals*, exhibition catalogs, and other related materials.

Near the end of my stay, I visited Katie Pasquini Masopust at her home and studio on the outskirts of Santa Fe. Katie, Yvonne Porcella, and I will be panel presenters during SAQA's *Art and Excellence* Conference to be held May 21-24, '09 in Athens, Ohio. Our panel is scheduled for May 23 and is titled SAQA's *First 20 Years and Beyond*.

Seeing Katie's beautiful work near the end of my stay reminded me again of the beautiful work by other New Mexico SAQA members I had seen earlier in my visit. I have been honored to support SAQA's talented artist members through my outreach efforts over this last year.

Report from the SAQA executive director

by Martha Sielman



As I write this in August, I have just returned from a vacation in England. When we planned our trip, I convinced my husband that

on the last day we should take a train from London up to Birmingham for the first day of the *Festival of Quilts*.

The *Festival of Quilts* is produced by Twisted Threads. Featured artists who had special exhibits included Dorothy Caldwell, Susan Brandeis, Ricky Tims, Inge Hueber, Sandy Snowden, and Pauline Burbidge, among others. In addition to SAQA's special exhibit, there were displays of work by Colour FX, the European Art Quilt Foundation, and the European Quilt Association, as well as the juried exhibits.

SAQA's exhibit was the latest of the *Transformations* exhibits, each of which has premiered at the *Festival of Quilts*. *Icons & Imagery* was juried by Rudolf Smend, owner of Galerie Smend in Cologne, Germany. It will be traveling to the South African National Quilt Festival in Gauteng in September and then to the Coos Art Museum in Coos Bay, Oregon in December and to the Everhart Museum in Scranton, Pennsylvania in May.

Icons & Imagery is a fascinating exhibition. After working for many weeks on the images and text for the catalog with our art director Deidre Adams, it was exciting to see the artwork in person.

When I arrived at the festival, I met a crew from justhands-on.tv who asked to interview me for a segment for an online program. This will air

around Christmas and they hope it will be picked up by BBC. One of the questions I was asked was, "Does SAQA find that the innovative nature of the artwork attracts many young artists to the medium and to the organization?" I answered that while we have some younger members, most of our membership is over 50 and has come to art quilting as a second career, finding the time and energy to express themselves creatively through art quilting once the push to launch careers and families is past.

This question made me think about why SAQA's demographic is what it is. I would like to challenge each and every member to find ways to increase awareness of what this medium has to offer, especially for people under 30. I'd love to hear from you about what you try and what results you get.

From the editor

by Carolyn Lee Vehslage



Like many SAQA volunteers, I do more than 'just' edit the *SAQA Journal*.

This year I'm on the planning committee for SAQA's 2009 *Art and Excellence* conference in con-

junction with *Quilt National '09* in Athens, Ohio.

There will be six pre-conference 3-day workshops Monday through Wednesday, May 18-20, 2009. Smadar Knobler will teach Silk/Textile Painting, Christine Zoller will demonstrate Shibori techniques, Maria Peagler will help us with Color Mastery, Deidre Adams will get us acquainted with PhotoShop for Artists, Kim Lakin will teach Art and Design Fundamentals, and Mr. Leslie Gabriëse will coach us through Complex Designs. Class size will be limited to 15 students.

On Thursday, May 21, the board will meet for the full day, while the

SAQA reps meet for the afternoon. Those who've taken one of the pre-conference workshops and those who have arrived early will take tours of local fiber art events. In the evening, we'll have a special artist "speed dating" session to get to know each other.

Friday, May 22, will start with two choices of the one-hour mini-workshops in the morning, then lunch, followed by two more choices of workshops in the afternoon. Workshops will be presented by Sandra Sider, Patricia Gould, Gregory Case, Carol Taylor, Gwyned Trefethen, Carol Ann Waugh, Deb Cashatt and Kris Sazaki (the Pixeladies), and Lisa Chipetine and Michele Hardman. The evening begins with the much anticipated opening of *Quilt National '09* at the Dairy Barn, followed by the banquet and the exciting Art-in-a-Box IV auction.

We'll start off Saturday, May 23, with the ever-popular mentoring

sessions and a trunk show of artwork and books by SAQA members. Over lunch, we'll hear from our first keynote speaker, career coach Alyson B. Stanfield. Then there will be several panel discussions, and Don Bacigalupi, the director of the Toledo Museum of Art, will give the closing keynote speech. The day will be completed with a BBQ, giving us all more time to network.

We'll finish off the weekend's activities with a Friends of Fiber Brunch on Sunday, May 24, and one last opportunity to take in the *Quilt National* exhibition before everyone heads home to celebrate Memorial Day. I look forward to catching up with SAQA members whom I've met at the past two conferences and meeting other members who will be attending. It's always a good time for me to learn what you would like to see covered in future issues of the *SAQA Journal*.

Hope to see you in Athens!

Board report

by Penny McMorris

Do you remember when you first joined SAQA? Do you recall what you hoped you might get out of your new SAQA membership? Well, whether it was meeting other like-minded artists, learning more about making art, being seen by more potential collectors, or learning how to make your art more of a career than a pastime, the board always has your interests at the top of our agenda.

I'm reminded of this whenever our president, Judith Content, reports on where she's traveled and which groups she's seen. She makes it her mission to promote SAQA and the potential of exhibiting and collecting

art quilts wherever she goes. This summer, when she hosted collectors from the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, she broke new ground by giving a presentation on collecting textiles. Most of her audience had never considered it before, but by the time they left her studio, not only did they know more about SAQA, but several were excited by with the idea of adding textiles to their collections.

Vice President Lisa Chipetine is also driven to market SAQA and has come up with innovative ideas for enlarging the possible quilt-collecting pool. She's working with the rest of the marketing committee to define and target groups to whom we can

market art quilts. They may even put together a focus group comprised of people unfamiliar with art quilts, to fine-tune SAQA's marketing focus and materials. And here's a clever idea you can use to promote SAQA: Lisa suggests recycling your old *SAQA Journals* (she calls it "passing them forward"). Try leaving them at doctors', dentists', and various other public offices, rather than throwing them away, so that others may learn more about our organization.

For those of you who thrive on contact with other like-minded artists, know that the board has made it a priority to work networking time into

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Meet your new board members

John M. Walsh, III



I first saw Michael James's quilts on the BBC in 1988. While on a business trip in England, I turned on the television and there was Michael teaching a quilting class and exhibiting his quilts. I was thrilled by what I saw and knew I had to somehow become involved with the world of quilts. That was the start of my journey as an art quilt collector.

In 1992, I attended *Louisville Celebrates the American Quilt*, an event consisting of six different quilt shows held in conjunction with a weekend symposium. In the first 24 hours, I saw all six shows. I liked all the quilts, but I loved the art quilts. I knew then what I wanted to do—collect contemporary quilts—but I didn't have a clue how to start.

Then I got lucky. The last session I attended was on collecting quilts, and the last speaker was Penny McMorris, who talked about art quilts. What caught my attention was that she said there were many outstanding art quilts being created but few dedicated collectors. I met Penny and asked her to help me to learn about collecting. A couple of months later, I visited Penny and spent hours looking at 600 slides of art quilts while she shared with me the growth of each of 15 artists. After eight hours with a jeweler's loupe at my eye, I started to understand what this new medium of art quilts was all about. Around that time, I bought the first quilt for the collection.

Since then, Penny and I have built my collection to 78 quilts. We have commissioned several artists to create works, always on the theme of water,

which reflects my life's work: making water safe to use. There have been several exhibitions of works from the collection including 18 quilts at the International Quilt Study Center (2005), 25 quilts at the Arnot Art Museum in Elmira, New York (2008), and an upcoming exhibition of 50 quilts at the San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles in 2009. In addition to my participation on the SAQA board, I am currently on the boards of Friends of Fiber Art International, the International Quilt Study Center, as well as community development and business-related boards.

Through it all, my life has been immeasurably enriched by the many artists I have come to know and by other friends in the world of art quilts. I am looking forward to continuing to grow as I share in the work of our association with the other members of the SAQA board.

Dr. Carolyn L. Mazloomi



In the early 1970s, making a quilt was the farthest thing from my mind. I'm an aerospace engineer, and my life revolved around my family and airplanes. A trip to the Dallas Trade Market, where I saw quilts from an Appalachian cooperative, ignited an interest in quilting. From that moment I was hooked. Since that time, I've gone through a few sewing machines, commandeered an entire floor of my home for studio space, and gained a community of new friends around the world.

While quilts are an important art form, until recently the historical

contributions of African Americans to the art form were virtually dismissed. African American quilts were consigned to the margins of quilt history, surrounded by distorted views and myths. It was important for me set the record straight, and so began my involvement in the study of quilt history.

I founded the Women of Color Quilters Network in 1983 to help preserve quiltmaking in the national African American community and to aid artists in selling their works. To document the scope of African American contributions to American quilt history, I started my own publishing company. Paper Moon Publishing is devoted to printing monographs and compilations of art quilts, fine craft, and photography.

There was a need to promote exhibitions for emerging artists to gain exposure on a national level. I started curating museum exhibitions over a decade ago because I felt it was the best way to get exposure for African American quilters.

I'm passionately interested in the economic and social development of women and have attended every United Nations Conference for Women since 1975. It was at the second world conference, held in Denmark, that I realized that quiltmaking could offer third-world women opportunities to financially sustain themselves. I became involved with textile cooperatives in Africa, South America, and India. For the conference held in Beijing, I was asked to be one of the editors of the commemorative book *Star Quilts*. Since this first foray into writing, I have written several books, including *Spirits of the Cloth*, *Threads of Faith*, *Textural Rhythms*, and *Quilting African American Women's History*. I look forward with enthusiasm to working with SAQA.

Seller beware!

By Deborah Weir

What could be more exciting than receiving an email from someone who has seen your artwork on your web site and wants to make a purchase? A purchase of two pieces! Your two largest and most expensive pieces! She has nothing but compliments for the artwork and is thrilled to be buying them for her new home as she's moving from Alabama to South Africa and has lots of new walls. Warm feelings all around. Then she's off to London for her sister's wedding. But the moving company is packing for her and her jet-setting husband is handling everything. Don't worry. He'll have a money order in the mail in just days, if you send him your street address and phone number. You do. He does! And that's where the story really begins.

In March of 2008, I was contacted by a person representing herself as Nicki Bauer. She had seen my web site and wished to purchase two of my art quilts. She was enthusiastic and full of praise for the artwork, buttering me up with lots of emails extolling its beauty and my talents. It was clear that she was not a native user of English, but she was so peppy and full of cheer that I overlooked the odd usage and grammatical errors. Her intentions were clear. She wanted my artwork shipped with her home furnishings from the U.S. and told me she'd set up shipping arrangements through First Atlantic Shippers of London. They contacted me right away to ask about packing requirements and to arrange a date to come to my studio to pick up the quilts. They were going to pack them and cart them off, making my life easy as pie. The details were impressive.

Then I got an email from her "husband," Jeff Bauer, who posted me a check that I had in about three days. It was in U.S. dollars, drawn on

Regions Bank of Montgomery, Alabama. And it was for two and a half times the amount of the purchase! This is how the scam works: they want the overpayment in their pockets, and since the check was bad—as I would soon discover—they would get the money from me before I discovered what they were up to.

I immediately brought the check to my bank to deposit. The next day, I received four cell phone calls from "Jeff Bauer" (who had a Nigerian accent to go with that German name) saying I was to go to the local MoneyGram station (they provided the address), send the difference between the selling price of the quilts and the amount of the check to the shipping company immediately, and that the quilts would be picked up at my studio that very afternoon—rush, rush. I called MoneyGram, and their operator said this sounded like a typical scam and made it clear to me that I should not send the money. Then I searched Google and found:

1. There is no such company as First Atlantic Shippers;
2. The bank is real but had recently gone through a name change and was in some degree of chaos; and
3. The address to which I was supposed to have sent the money was in fact a Ladbrokes offsite betting office in London.

I made some calls: to my bank to warn them to expect the check to bounce, which it did in five days; and to Regions Bank, which was nonchalant about the whole thing. I mailed them a copy of the check with an explanation of what occurred.

I filed a report with the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center and included all the email addresses they used. I contacted the London police department branch in the jurisdiction with the Ladbrokes office. I called Ladbrokes itself to give them a heads-up about what was happening on their premises. And I contacted every

See "Seller beware" on page 28



Joolama III, 36" x 44", © 2008 Deborah Weir

Should quilters provide artist's statements?

By Jude Larzelere

Recently I exhibited in a solo show at the Newport Art Museum. In an adjoining gallery there was a solo show of a woman painter. Next to each of my quilts there was an artist's statement about the meaning and motivation for the work. This information was solicited from me by the curator. Next to each of the paintings was a small card stating the dimensions, medium, and date. I was struck by this difference. Painters never give explanations of their work to viewers; quilters nearly always do, especially in group shows.

No matter what style, when art is representational, the artist and viewer share many elements of a common language. One may not "get" the story completely correctly. A man leading a woman on a donkey traveling in a forested part of a European landscape may be the Holy Family en route to Bethlehem, or they may be peasants on the way to market. While it is clear that there is a forest, a donkey, a man, and a woman, and that we can infer something about weather conditions, time of year, and ages of the people, there may well be more. Allegorical, historic, or religious meaning is clear to a viewer only if she shares a cultural context with the painter. The exact meanings of things and their relative importance depends, then, on this shared context. The job of an art historian or curator is to discover and explain this context. The artist often gives a hint with a revealing title: "Mary and Joseph," or "The Woods Near Dresden," or "The Fight into Egypt."

Representational painting also exists in another context where we can evaluate its purely artistic aspects. Is the red cloak the correct color? Were the pigments hand ground or commercially produced? Is that dot of red positioned within the painting in a way that enhances the overall

composition? Is the modeling of the folds stiff or masterful? Some of this information can be evaluated and appreciated by a naïve eye; some of it requires education in the elements of technique and style. One needs to learn a codex of new words that designate and clarify these purely artistic elements of the painting. Still, the naïve viewer can appreciate the delicate beauty of the woman's face without knowing that her line of sight exactly follows an important diagonal alignment within the composition. Whether it is a successful painting is independent of its ability to present a story.

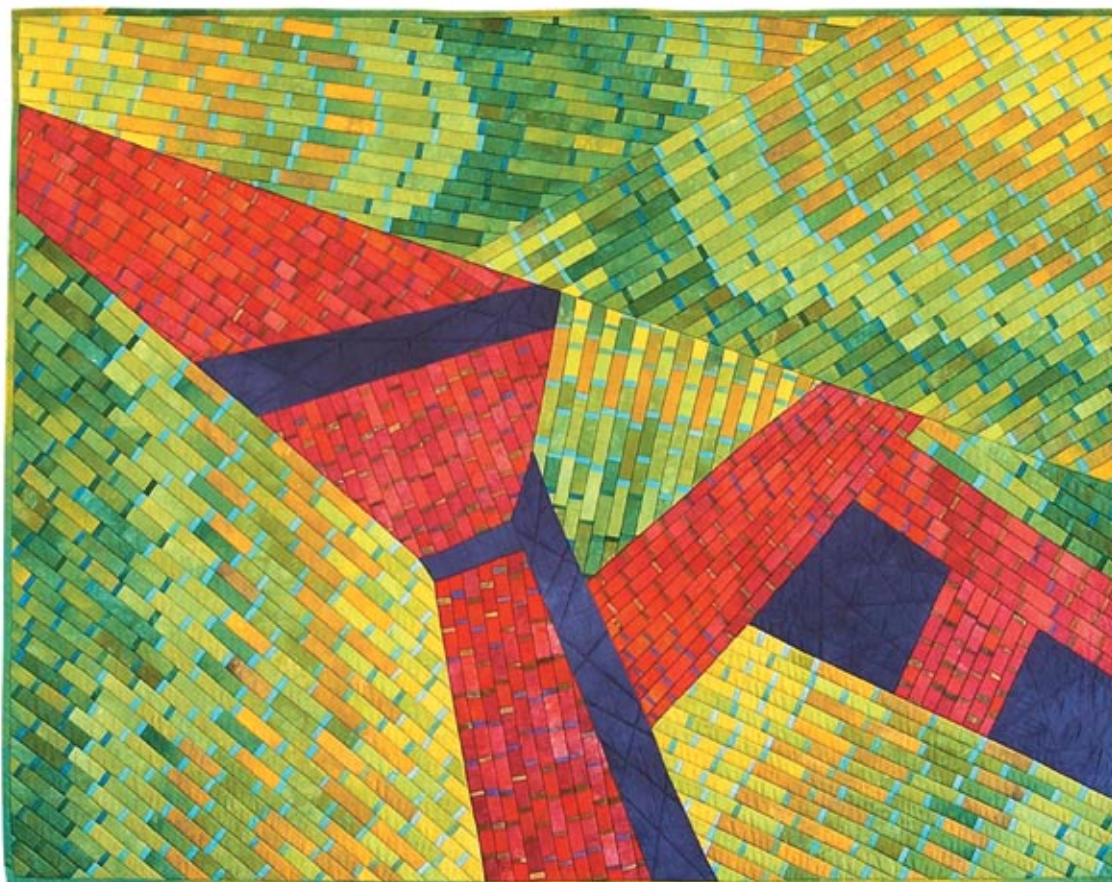
When painters moved away from representational art into abstraction and then on to various nonrepresentative styles, there wasn't always a story apparent in the picture. In fact, with action painters and abstract expressionists, the painting became a sort of souvenir of the artistic process, the artistic mood. The paint often did not designate or refer to anything outside its own physical existence. Instead of a "story," now there was a "secret." What was a viewer to do now? The art critic's job expanded from uncovering and explaining the story and evaluating the technical mastery of the artist to becoming a medium who translated what he saw into another language. This language described visual cues and clues that were accessible to just a very few. Paintings' stories became completely self-referential—the painting was about painting or about gesture or about color or about minimal purity. A limited few understood the newly evolving codex. Most viewers had a "Where's the beef?" reaction to a great deal of contemporary art because they were looking for a story that painters were not interested in telling anymore. A new myth arose of the painter as explorer and hero

venturing ever farther off the edge of the storied world into an ever thinner ether of self-searching for something unique and new to say. However, it was said in a language known only to, and guarded by, the artist.

"Getting" this new art was a measure of the sensitivity, intelligence and possession of esoteric knowledge, or pure guesswork as to what it really was up there on the gallery wall. An industry of critical reviews, art magazines, retrospectives, heavy books, and even movies attempted to interface between the obscure workings of the artistic mind and the public. Perhaps this is not so very different from the need to know the Bible in order to understand the art produced in Medieval Christian countries so that the image can be correctly decoded.

So, where do we as contemporary quilters come into this? Contemporary quilts emerged in the mid 70s after much of the innovation and exploration in painting had run its course. Quilting itself came out of a complex past—the completely geometric exploration of grid-based block designs (although many of these geometric patterns had symbolic and/or narrative subtexts); the pictorial elements of appliqué; the memorial, celebratory or friendship quilts which often included text, biblical quotes, personal messages, or dedications. The historic quilt existed in more than one dimension and carried artistic elements and often a story. In fact, the story in each quilt was such an important part of historic quilts that the contemporary quilt is often expected to carry a story as well.

This experience that quilts hold a story is, I believe, the basis of an expectation that an artistic statement (telling the story) belongs with art quilts when they are displayed. The tradition of "show and tell" at quilt guild meetings expands into the



Landscape Pieces
38" x 48"
© 2006 Jude Larzelere
(fabrics dyed by Heide
Stoll-Weber)

photo by Susannah Snowden, Westerly, RI

artist's statement on the wall next to the quilt or accompanying the photo of the quilt in the book. The contemporary quilt world includes traditional quilters coming out of the guilds and quilting bees, and the art quilters, many of whom have passed through formal training at an art school. There is a blending of these two traditions that can be seen in many quilt shows, catalogs, and collections of art quilts. Very often a statement about the individual quilt, the quilter's process, inner motivation, special techniques, and intention toward the viewer is solicited and displayed alongside the exhibited quilt or on the same page as the printed photo of the quilt.

I believe that if we want to be considered serious artists, our work should stand alone on exhibit just as paintings, prints, photographs, and sculptures do. My personal sense is that a piece of visual art should first of all be an aesthetic experience. Additional information is just that: additional information.

But maybe that additional information is the point, after all, for most

viewers. It brings back the older tradition of the story in a piece of art. Is it too elitist to demand that a work of visual art be evaluated and appreciated first of all visually? Would narrative, polemics, and persuasion be better expressed in another way if the visual components are not uppermost in the mind of the creator?

A SAQA open discussion via email elicited 31 responses. Seventeen of the respondents felt that quilters should save statements about their work for an artist comment book or limit information to title, dimensions, date on the wall. Twelve respondents felt that there was something significantly valuable in being able to read the artist's explanations of a quilt simultaneously while looking at it. Two were undecided. I will close with two quotes from these pro and con replies.

From Alison Schwabe: "Bravo! This is one of my soapbox topics. I see the artist's statement as one of the regrettable but persistent little archaicities that bind us to the traditional quilt world and its modus operandi just as securely as any mother's

apron strings. Honestly, regardless of medium, I have always felt a well-chosen title is all the statement a viewer needs to start to interact with a work."

From Kate Themel: "I have to say, I find the artist's statement to be a great conversation starter. I don't find it archaic or even see it as being connected to the quilting world in a negative way. I can't see how the artist giving a brief statement could take anything away from the work itself. The back story adds a great dimension to the viewer's experience (if the viewer wants to read it.) In fact, I wish [exhibitions of] paintings included statements as well—especially when the artist doesn't even give the piece a title. Maybe artists working in other media can learn something from us instead of us constantly trying to change ourselves to fit into the 'art' world." ▼

SAQA active member Judith Larzelere is a full time art quilter living in Westerly, Rhode Island. Her web site is www.judithlarzelere.com.

To publish or to be published

That is the question — Part I

By Carol Ann Waugh

Getting “published” is exciting. Having your name on a book is a permanent mark on our society and may far outlive you in history. It’s a way of saying, “I was here and I made a difference.” I think that’s why so many people are attracted to writing, blogging, YouTubing, and creating a page on a social networking site. And, being published means that you are automatically an “expert” in your field—something that opens many doors.

So, let’s assume that you’ve reached the stage where you’ve created a body of unique work, or you’ve developed or invented a new technique or a new twist on an old technique, or you have a book idea that’s new to the art quilter’s market. How do you go about getting published?

There are basically two ways to get a book out into the market. One is to get an established publisher to agree to publish your book, and the other is to publish it yourself.

This article will focus on the advantages and disadvantages of being published by someone else.

Trade book publishers have been around for a long time and have developed tried-and-true processes for choosing the books they publish each season. It is almost impossible for them to deviate from this process. Because they have a history and know what has sold and what hasn’t, they rarely take a chance on something that deviates from their model. But the inside truth is that only 1 or 2 out of every 10 books published are successes, and publishers can never tell which books in their list will take off and which won’t. Knowing their publishing models could be a big advantage in selecting the right publisher for your idea, but it’s not always easy to find out unless you have a relationship with an editor or agent who is privy to this information.

The good news is that many art/craft publishers are very open to receiving proposals from authors and many times have guidelines posted on their web sites. An analysis of recently published titles of art quilting books shows that publishers are now looking for:

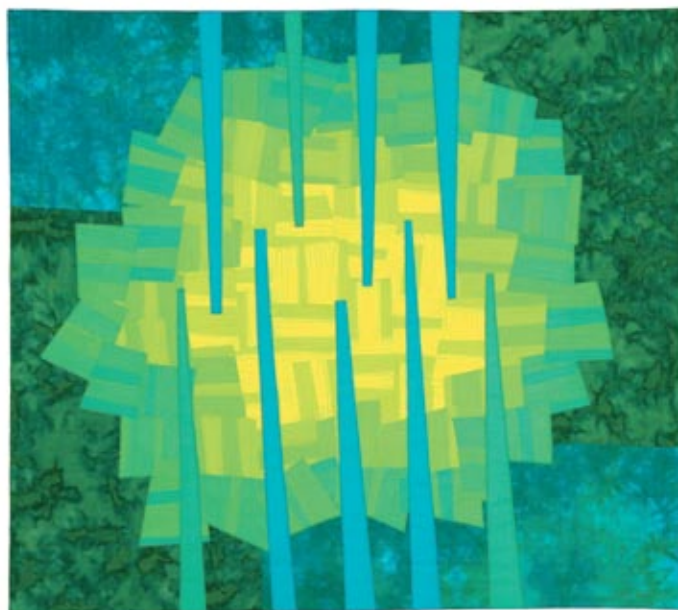
- New techniques or themes
- An author who is a teacher and so can market the book
- Projects that will appeal to readers
- Other books that can be developed into a series from your artwork

Getting published is not an easy task. Before contacting a potential publisher, here are some things you can do that make you appear publishable:

- Establish a web site for your artwork to show you take yourself seriously
- Build a resume showing several years of commitment to your art (awards won, acceptance into juried shows, speaking engagements, articles you’ve written, etc.)
- Develop a well-researched book idea (know the competition and define your niche)

There are many advantages to going the traditional route. The primary advantage is that you don’t assume any financial risk. In fact, good publishers will offer you an advance on royalties to defray costs associated with creating the manuscript. In addition, they will pay for photography, illustration, copyediting, design, and manufacturing—in short, all the expenses of getting your book into inventory. During this process, you will be guided by an experienced and helpful editor who will make suggestions and offer ideas to improve your book along the way.

The second thing a publisher brings to the table is an established distribution and marketing system. This ensures that your book will get reviewed in the right publications and will be available to bookstores, libraries, and specialty markets



Yellow Submarine

25" x 28"

© 2007 Carol Ann Waugh

See “To publish” on page 31

What makes a series work?

By Virginia A. Spiegel

What makes a series work? This is my post-mortem for a failed series.

I was so fired up about *Third Thoughts*, a series based on 365 mixed-media collages I had made over the course of a year. I thought the spontaneously composed collages constructed of found magazine images and the daily paper flotsam and jetsam of my life would be interesting to convert into small art quilts.

What fun it would be to take my time, to reconsider these quick collages that sprang from my unconscious, and to make conscious choices while interpreting them as art quilts. I had 365 sources of inspiration, but thirty-some small artworks later, I lost interest.

Normally I would be happy with a series with more than 30 pieces, but these are quite small, under 10x8 inches. I had hoped, with so much source material, to keep going until I had somewhere between 50 and 100 artworks. There are some great pieces among the *Third Thoughts* artwork. But when I was done, I was done. Why?

And what did I turn back to? My *Boundary Waters* series. It seems I'm still interested; I still have lots to say. The *Boundary Waters* series also has more than 30 artworks in it, but most are quite large and all are based on the 100 days my sister and I have spent in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness over the last five years. Our days there are spent in great solitude. As we say, "Two

women, three packs, one canoe." That's pretty much it except for rocks, sky, water, and trees.

So for me, what makes the *Boundary Waters* series work, while *Third Thoughts* does not?

The answer is passion. I come to this passion in three ways. Sometimes I'm struck, almost in a physical sense, by a moment, a color, a movement, a sort of stop-time event that grips me and won't let me go until I do something with it. These are the glory moments of being an artist and so infrequent as to be a miracle and a blessing when they happen.

Sometimes the passion begins with a tiny idea. For example, I had a crazy thought that maybe I should raise bees for my garden. Then I started reading, and the next thing I knew, the whole topic was out of hand and ripe for a series. It became my salute to matriarchal societies in the paper-and-wax series, *The Geometry of Bees*.

I like to research a topic, to ponder what interests me about a subject, to write about it, to distill tons of information and feelings into a series of artwork.

And sometimes passion comes from living a topic through my landscape gardening, my canoeing, and my wilderness journeys. I experience these topics as part of who I am and the way I structure my days and years. My library has a huge section on the environment, nature, and the wilderness. I'm interested in an ongoing and very profound way.

I know when a series needs to be

started, as I feel an actual physical stirring inside of me. I think of it as the sap rising, the ideas and images percolating, just waiting to come out. And it's not always the happy-side-of-the-street passion. Passion often slides along the dark edges I choose not to acknowledge in my daily life.

If I have to beat myself up to start or continue a series, I am going in the wrong direction. If I find myself cutting up completed work, adding more layers, endlessly tinkering—these are not good signs.

But I know from the very beginning when an artwork is going to be passionate. For example, when I painted the fabric for *Boundary Water #19*, there was power in the brush strokes. I can close my eyes and be once again in that moment, the passion flowing out from my arm and hand and onto the fabric. I cut up the fabric, sewed it back together, and stitched it. It was heart, hand, mind—done! Oh, the joy of making art when that happens.

Did it come out of the blue? No. I had a photo from my trip to the Boundary Waters in one of my notebooks of a mother log with little green pine trees growing out of the fallen and decayed tree trunk. What a beautiful, concrete example of the reality of life. From death comes life. Organic matter in all things recycles endlessly. It's a big theme in a simple piece.

This doesn't mean there aren't false starts. No matter how prepared I am intellectually, when hand meets

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Boundary Waters 19, 18" x 102", © 2007 Virginia A. Spiegel



European Art Quilts V: notes from the jury process

by Mirjam Pet-Jacobs

This year I was pleased to be one of the administrators for the jurying of *European Art Quilts V*. When I arrived, the first two rounds, one consisting of viewing all works in complete silence without decisions and one round of unanimous rejection without discussion, had just been finished.

160 pieces had been entered by 128 artists from 12 countries. A five-person international jury had the difficult task of selecting about 45 works. The selection criteria were originality, artistic quality, and expression. The jury, four well-known European

textile artists and a gallery owner, was shown a numbered overview image and a close-up of every entry. The requirement for entries was digital images only. Both overview and close-up were projected simultaneously by means of two computers, two projectors, and two screens. All jurors had lists of the artwork with corresponding numbers, titles, dimensions, and the entrant's country of residence (in Europe or Israel). There were no names.

The other administrator and I took great care to note the numbers of the rejected artwork. As my co-adminis-

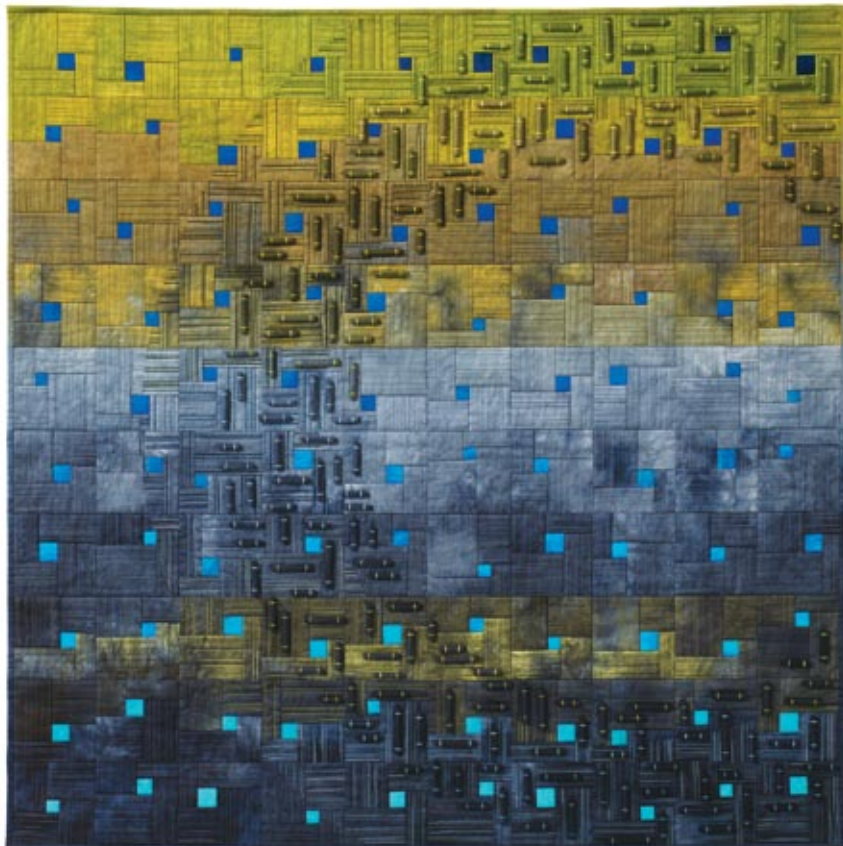
trator read out the numbers, I copied and pasted the results of the second round from the all-entries files to the rejection files on both computers.

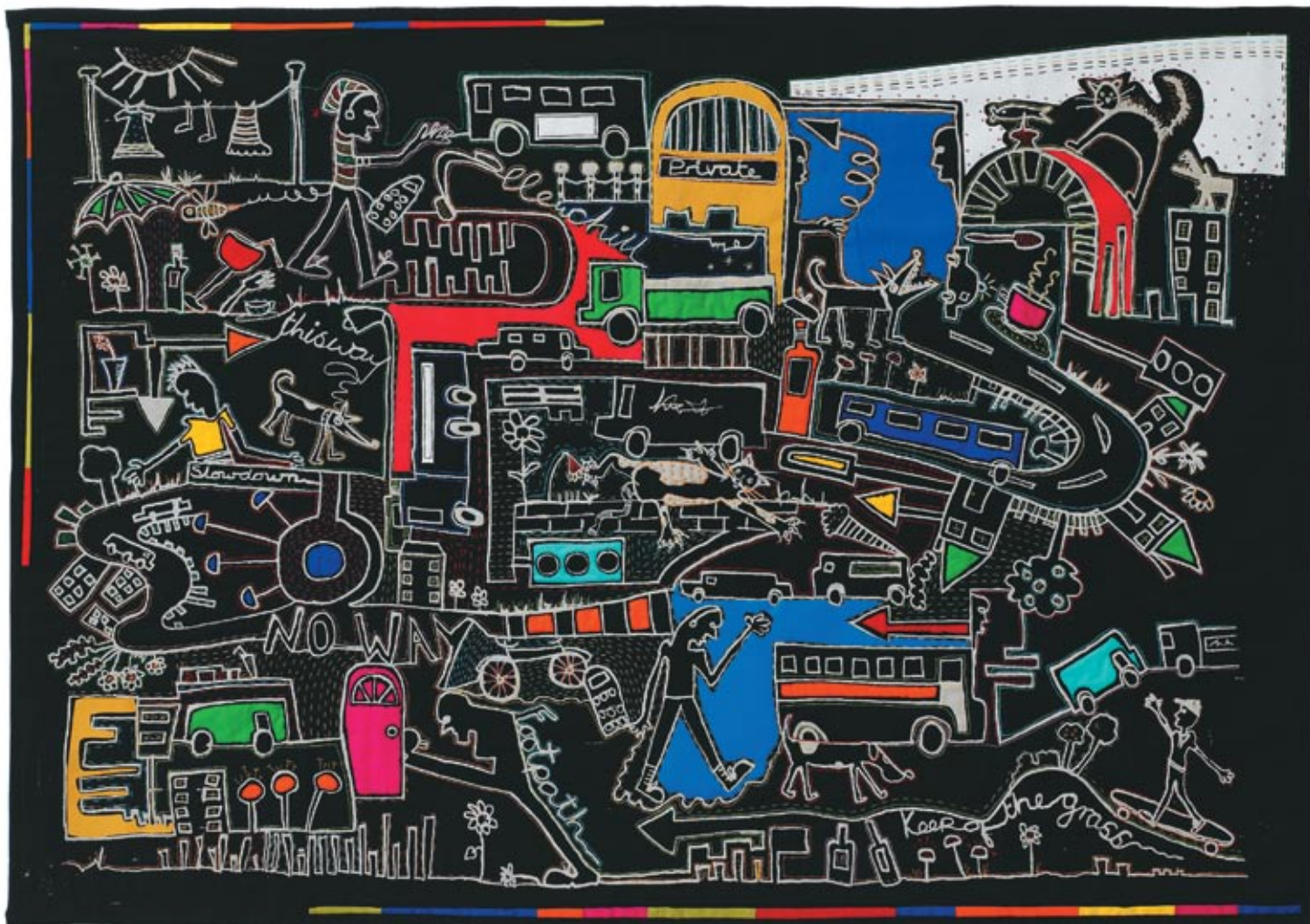
The third round was one of unanimous selection. This was a small group, because choices had to be unanimous. These numbers went into the selection files.

The organizer had asked for samples of the actual artwork. The last round of the first day consisted of a discussion in which these were shown. This proved to be invaluable in case of doubt by a juror, which happened more than once. Colors,

right: *I Want to Stitch*, 60" x 40", © 2007 Bethan Ash

below: *Connected Circles*, 52" x 52", © 2008 Anco Brouwers-Branderhorst





City Line 2 – Colouring Book, 34" x 40" © 2008 Avril Douglas

materials, techniques, and general impression can look so different from a computer image. Decisions were made, and a few more works were moved to either the selected or the rejected groups. All the jurors were in agreement about these choices.

On the second day, the great bulk of entries were considered. I had placed hard-copy photos of the overall views on each corresponding sample (if provided). Entries from the same countries were grouped together. The organizer had asked that no more than 6-8 selections be made from each country, as it was important to maintain a European character for the exhibition.

First, the already selected pieces and the remaining pieces were quickly shown to refresh the jurors' memories. Then each juror was asked

to write down 10-15 pieces of the remaining entries he or she wanted to include by carefully examining everything that was laid out on the table. These choices were made without discussion. On request, specific digital images were shown on the screen and/or artist statements were read out.

All entries with 3-5 votes, if approved by all jurors, were selected. Then, after discussion, the last few pieces were chosen.

To round off a harmonious and fulfilling judging, the 42 names of the selected artists were revealed and the selected works were shown on the screen. The result was an exhibition that satisfied all the jurors.

European Art Quilts V will be exhibited at the Museum of American Quilter's Society in Paducah,

Kentucky, from mid-April to the end of July 2009. For more information, visit www.europeanartquilt.com. ▼

Author's note: In 1996, Dutch textile artist and SAQA member Olga Prins-Lukowski and her husband Simon Prins founded the European Art Quilt Foundation, whose purpose is organizing juried travelling exhibitions of European art quilts in which all European quilters can enter contemporary work every three years. There are no restrictions on theme, materials or techniques.

SAQA professional artist Mirjam Pet-Jacobs is a textile artist living in Waalre, The Netherlands. She was the winner of the SAQA CREAM award at this year's ArtQuilt Elements show in Wayne, Pennsylvania. Her web site is www.mirjampetjacobs.nl.

My year as an artist in residence at Arrowmont

By Kim Eichler-Messmer

In April 2007, I was privileged to be selected as an artist in residence at Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. With the use of a private studio and the strong support system of Arrowmont's creative, caring staff, the year-long Artist-in-Residence program is truly a remarkable experience. There are many benefits to being a resident at Arrowmont, but the most valuable to me was being allowed ample free time to create.

Arrowmont's Artist-in-Residence program was initiated in 1991 by Bill Griffith, Arrowmont's assistant director. Since its inception, the program has grown to provide an 11-month opportunity for five pre-professional artists to create a new body of work, build skills, and immerse themselves in a network of successful artists.

Residents live and work on Arrowmont's campus and are provided

with a private studio. Candidates are selected based on their portfolios, resumes, and stated reasons for wanting to participate in the residency. They must then go through an in-person interview process before final selections are made.

The artistic community at Arrowmont is rich and one of the most beneficial aspects of the residency. Each workshop session brings in around 100 people, including professional artists, art educators, art students, and hobbyists. Many of Arrowmont's staff are highly skilled artists. There is a constant dialogue and exchange of ideas and techniques not only in classes, but also through slide lectures, open demonstrations, show-and-tell sessions, and lively discussions at meals.

One of my favorite aspects of the Arrowmont experience is the open studios the residents held during

class sessions. Every Wednesday we opened our studios to students and faculty in order to share what we had been making and to sell our work. It was wonderful to get feedback from a diverse group of artists from all skill levels and to connect in a more personal way with others in the fiber field.

The Artist-in-Residence program also offers participants the opportunity to expand their teaching skills. Resident artists are stewards of Arrowmont's ArtReach and Artists-in-Schools programs designed to enhance Sevier County schools' art programs. More than 3,000 school children are exposed to Arrowmont's resident artists annually, either through a day of hands-on learning onsite in Arrowmont's well-equipped studios or through resident artist visits to each of the county's schools, or both. My teaching skills are much improved thanks to Arrowmont's community programs. Having only 15 minutes to both explain and demonstrate felting to a pack of energetic five-year-olds demands that one quickly learn to teach in a way that is meaningful and interesting to a given audience.

Resident artists gain valuable experience assisting Karen Green, the gallery coordinator. The residents are given their own gallery space in Arrowmont's Loggia Gallery to do with as they wish with guidance from Karen. Throughout the year, residents assist Karen in Arrowmont's main galleries, the Sandra J. Blain Galleries, to set up and take down a wide variety of exhibitions. Working with Karen provided me with an understanding of how a gallery is run and the care and effort required each time a show is mounted.

The work I'm making now stems from ideas that started in graduate school and were refined



Three Times, 40" x 46", ©2007 Kim Eichler-Messmer

at Arrowmont. Living in an artistic community, being allowed free time to create, discussing ideas and techniques with other artists, and teaching in the community all strengthened my ability to create artwork. I am very grateful to have been chosen for this experience and take my responsibility as an ambassador of Arrowmont seriously.

In college at Iowa State University, my major was drawing and printmaking. I was unhappy with how impersonal and flat my drawings and prints were, so I started making them into collages. Eventually I incorporated stitching. It was in my last year of college that I took my first fibers class, screen-printing on fabric, and I was hooked. It suddenly made sense to use drawing and printmaking on fabric to create the work I had been exploring on paper. I continued at Iowa State for a year after graduating to do an independent study with Teresa Paschke, who taught me how to dye fabric and introduced me to Jane Dunnewold's *Complex Cloth* book.

In 2004, my first year of graduate school at the University of Kansas, I began making quilts in earnest. Until then I had been using my own dyed and printed fabric in collages that, in retrospect, differed little from my drawn and printed paper collages. There was still something impersonal about them that left me feeling dissatisfied. At KU, I studied with Mary Anne Jordan, and hearing her talk about her own work began to give me confidence in my belief that quilts are more than just a hobbyist's pastime. Quilts are true art and have a history as rich as any medium.

The way I start each piece is very organic. I generally have a basic image of the finished quilt in my head, but I try not to plan steps because my work always comes out looking trite or stagnant when I do that. I dye a few yards of fabric and then start printing. I don't let anything become precious. If a piece is faltering, I'm not afraid to make drastic revisions. I might overdye it,



Five Times

58" x 37"

©2007 Kim Eichler-Messmer

immerse the piece in Thiox, cut it apart and sew it together in a different order, or use devoré over a large portion, even if it's 100% cotton. Each step seems to lead to the next. Sometimes the more I struggle, the better the art becomes. Each layer adds richness to the finished product.

My work is inspired by patterns and repetition in the natural world, in architecture, in music, in the routine of daily life, and in the ebb and flow of time. I am intrigued by the way light and shadow play on buildings, how brick walls show years of wear, and how mold and moss grow on surfaces. Motifs such as teeth, bones, and animals represent transition and the fragility of life. We see the world around us through a filter of our own individual identities. My quilts are an abstracted view of my experiences and environment.

This year I am an instructor at the Kansas City Art Institute as a replace-

ment for Jason Pollen while he is on sabbatical. I will also be teaching at the Lawrence Arts Center in Lawrence, Kansas. I am very fortunate to have a studio in Kansas City, where I can be found when I'm not teaching. The Artist-in-Residence program at Arrowmont was a life-changing experience for me. I'm very grateful to everyone there. The staff is incredibly supportive and genuinely cares about every resident. My fellow residents helped me grow artistically and improved my communication skills by leaps and bounds. They will be lifelong friends. I wholeheartedly recommend both the Artist-in-Residence program and Arrowmont's amazing workshops. For more information, visit www.arrowmont.org. ▼

SAQA active member Kim Eichler-Messmer is an art quilter living in Lawrence, Kansas. Her web site is <http://eichlernessmer.com>.

Strategies for pricing your artwork

by Elizabeth Van Schaick

Determining the price of an art quilt can be a murky process. "Pricing is ultimately subjective," says Deborah Schwartzman, an artist and co-director of the *ArtQuilt Elements* exhibition. In her experience, Deborah has seen "a hugely inconsistent range [of prices]. Some artists grossly undervalue their pieces, and others go to the opposite extreme." Finding the balance between the two is more of an art than a science. If you expect to find one concrete, standard method for figuring price, you'll be frustrated. If you continually compromise or adjust, you can also run into problems. So how should you approach pricing?

First, force yourself to separate aesthetic and emotional value from monetary value. This can be difficult, particularly if you feel heavily

invested in a particular piece. You may need to make "Do not undervalue your artwork" your mantra. Aesthetic value and emotions are subjective. Try to use more objective and rational considerations to determine price. Selling art is a business.

It is helpful to compare your finished piece to pieces of the same size in other media. Do some research on what art quilts of similar size and/or technique by other artists of your experience level have sold for. When you decide on the next regional or national exhibition you aim to enter, ask the organizers about the sales. Or make contact with someone who has extensive experience as an organizer, curator, or director of an art organization. Create a database or notebook. Mine information from established quilt artists, perhaps through Internet

chat forums or blogs. This information will at least help you calibrate the general price range that the market will support.

Many artists and gallery owners believe that price should be based on size. Deborah Schwartzman relates her experience: "When working with an agent I had to come up with a per-square-foot price. That guided me for a long time. Once I established the price based on that scale, I had a general range of prices for the final sizes of my pieces. I also factor in my expenses in terms of materials." Using the cost for the area of materials used and a dollar rate per square inch (or square foot) for labor, you can come up with a base price. If you have no other determinants, this formula at least gives a practical way to come up with a number.

Caryl Bryer Fallert notes, "While pricing by the square foot seems like a crude way to price the product you have put your heart and soul into, it is a practical way to predict what a commission piece might be worth." Both Fallert and Susan Sanborn North recommend tracking the amount of time you spend on one typical quilt and establishing your hourly rate for your skilled labor. Figure the number of hours you actually spend working on the quilt. You should include time spent designing the piece, preparing patterns, piecing, basting, quilting, and binding the quilt, and even tidying your studio afterward. Multiply the number of hours by your dollar-per-hour rate. That's what you need to get a wholesale price. Double this number to allow for a maximum commission of 50%. This is your retail selling price. Measure the quilt and determine square inches or feet. If you divide the price of the quilt by square feet, this will serve as your per-square-foot price for all similar quilts.

The advantage of this system is



Feather Study #30

65" x 53"

© 2007 Caryl Bryer Fallert



left: *Nature's Ornaments: The Ash Seed Pod*, 65" x 20", © 2007 Deborah Schwartzman

below: *Windfall*, 43" x 86", © 2008 Carol Taylor



that pricing by the hour will at least establish decent compensation for time and effort, which might be a good gauge for a beginning artist. Sylvia Weir suggests that you don't set prices expecting to get back the value of your education and experience when starting out. Your aim is to get exposure for your artwork. Carol Taylor says that she never keeps track of how many hours she spends on a piece. However early in her career she did use an area-based formula, charging \$1200 for a 30x40-inch quilt. As she developed name recognition and won prizes, she was able to increase her prices. She says this system has "worked quite well for me and makes 'all things equal' in the big scheme of things, which makes my life easier."

Once you've sold a significant number of pieces and/or shown in a few exhibitions, you will have established appreciation among buyers. If you develop a profile as a lecturer or teacher, particularly in known fiber art events, you are within your rights to enter a slightly higher price range. The majority of quilt artists increase their earnings according to success

with initial sales, completing a degree or respected workshop program, or completing a commission for a prominent client or venue. Awards from significant events also help to establish your worth. As you build your profile, work on publicity. Mentions, profiles, and interviews in print will enhance your standing over time and the recognition will create excitement and augment your prices.

Does the venue factor into establishing a reasonable price for an art quilt? Carol Taylor says she does not base her prices on the prestige of the venue. "I feel that I need to establish a price that can fit all venues and keep it the same. The only exception might be if a piece won a major award or got some big honor and was widely seen. That one I might consider marking up." Carol Sara Shepps also says her prices are consistent everywhere. Shepps advises carefully researching whether your work is right for a venue, whether other artists shown there receive good display of their work and whether they are paid in a timely manner.

If you have to start in informal settings, show small pieces you've priced within the range acceptable for the conditions and the customers you're dealing with. A juried art fair may support higher prices than local gift shops. If a prominent gallery in a

known art enclave, like Santa Fe, New Mexico, or Asheville, North Carolina, takes on your work, this reflects a selective process and the work will sell best in a certain price range.

When you have situated yourself as a professional artist, you may eventually be able to add a small surcharge for the additional expenses of running your business, if your niche of the market will bear it. Overhead refers to the cost of running any business: owning or renting your workplace, heating and cooling, electricity, and web site expenses. These expenses count whether the workplace is one room in your house, a side building, or a separate studio location. If you pay for and maintain equipment such as a sewing machine, computer, printer, power tools, etc., that's a significant cost of making your artwork. Calculate these costs over a year or two and add a small percentage of that to the price of each piece.

When you have artwork shown in a public exhibition or a commercial gallery, you'll need to factor in commissions. In most cases, the venue or organization will take a percentage of the posted price as compensation for the cost of providing the space, staff, and publicity to promote the artwork. This percentage can range from

See "Pricing" on page 30

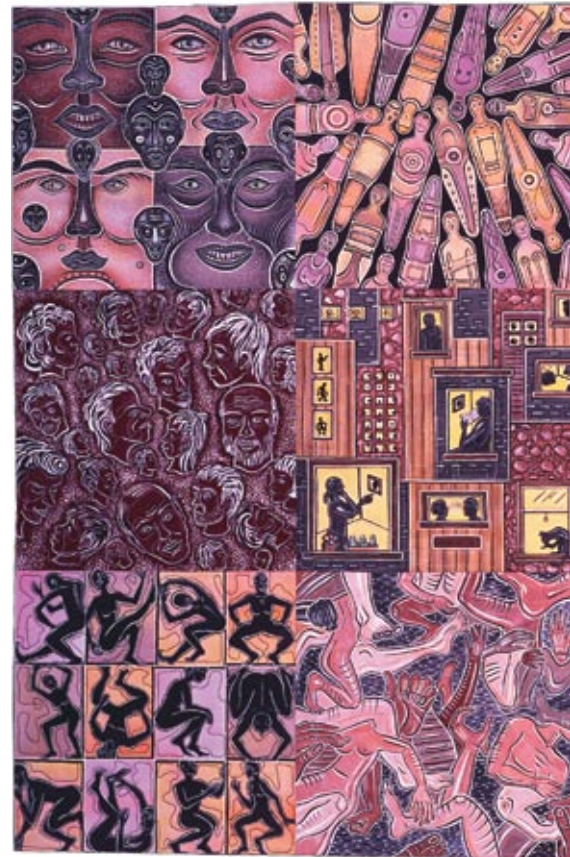
SAQA member gallery: *Political statements*

Patricia Anderson Turner

DARKly FURgotten

31" X 40" © 2006 | www.patriciaandersonturner.com

This Darfur woman was hung from a tree for three days and raped by the Janjaweed militia. She stands amidst a sea of trees representing countless victims of this all-too-common tool of war. She holds a replica of our planet based on a satellite image of Africa's dust storms and asks, "Will our story remain darkly forgotten?"



Linda MacDonald

So Many People 2

36" x 48" © 2006 | www.lindamacdonald.com

Populations are increasing worldwide. We need to address this and act according to long range goals and needs.

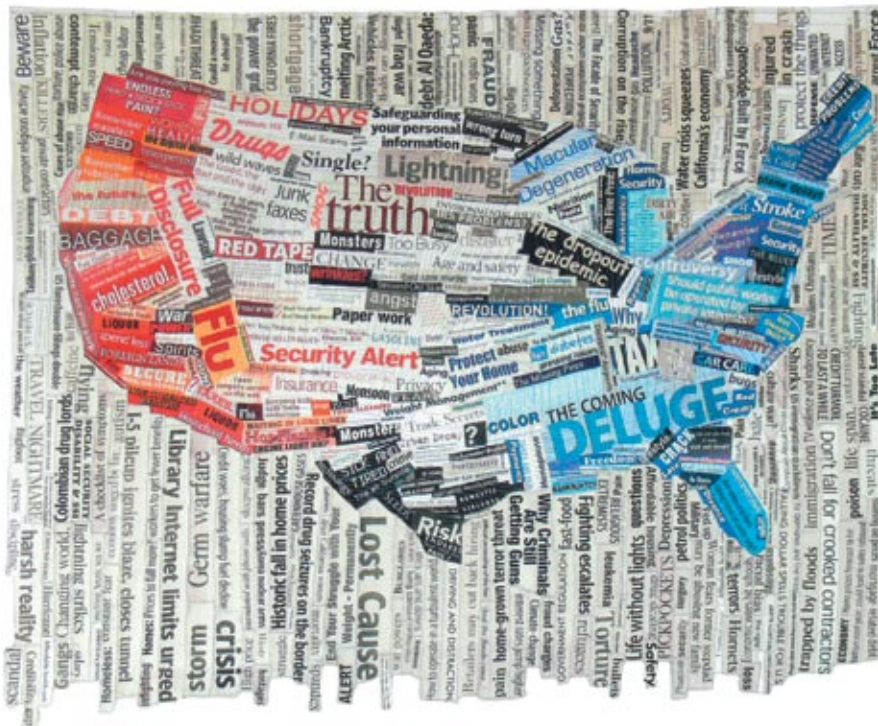
Pixeladies
(Deb Cashatt &
Kris Sazaki)

*The USA – Land of the Free,
Home of the Fearful*

25" x 30" © 2008

www.pixeladies.com

Our studio is located in a community service district that recently installed gates. This made us wonder what the people inside the gates feared so much that they had to try and keep it out. We looked no further than magazines and newspapers lying around the house to find the answer.





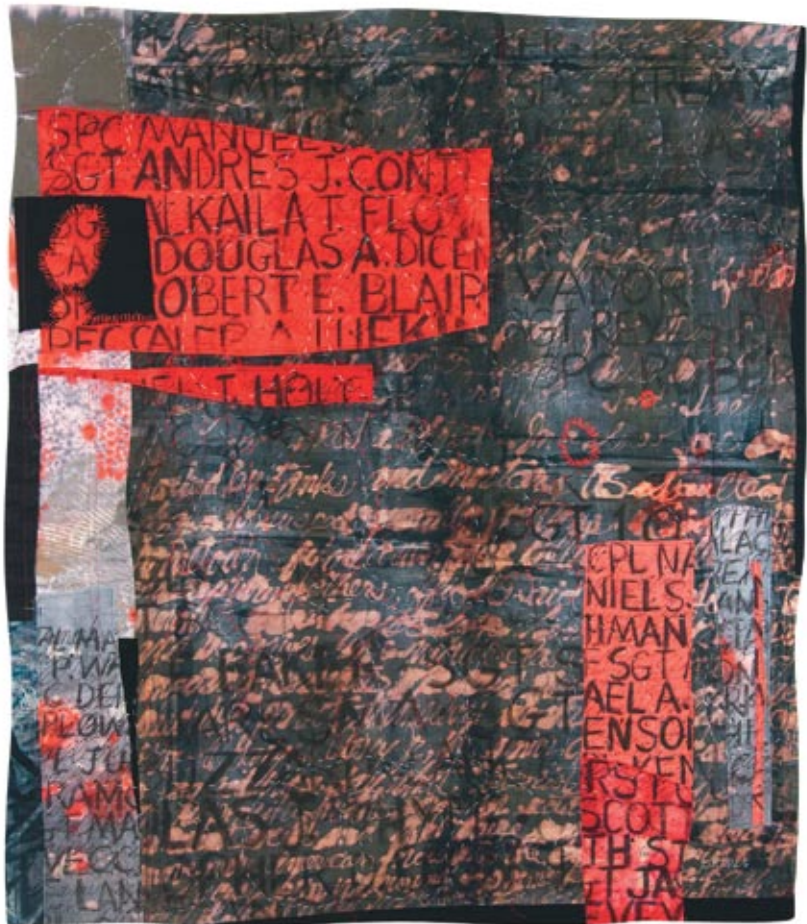
Judith Plotner

Are We Safer Now?

46" x 46" © 2006 | www.judithplotner.com

Are We Safer Now? is my response to the ongoing war in Iraq and its effect on terrorism.

ess the changes that will occur because of



Eileen Doughty

Be Very Afraid

23 x 21 © 2005
www.doughtydesigns.com

Words — used to hide, to obfuscate, to rant, to manipulate.

Cracking into the Chelsea art market

By Karen Maru

The Chelsea art district in New York City is a major center of contemporary art. Hundreds of art galleries are clustered in the buildings between 23rd and 29th streets, between 10th and 11th avenues. Top contemporary artists from around the world are shown in the spacious ground floor galleries, and the smaller galleries on upper floors have specialized shows often featuring emerging artists. For artists, Chelsea is one of *the* places to be. For critics, collectors, and the curious, Chelsea is the place to keep abreast of what is happening in contemporary art.

For years I've made it a habit to go to Chelsea, especially on winter weekends, when it is delightful to take the elevator up to the top floor of the taller buildings and walk down, stopping in several galleries per floor. One of the more exciting trends to me, as an artist who often works with fiber, has been to see more mixed media involving fiber and more fiber art hung along with more traditional media.

I was therefore very interested last year in the call for art on the SAQA web site from the Rhonda Schaller Studio on West 27th Street in Chelsea. The call was for a show called *Access: A Feminist Perspective*. It was tied into the Feminist Art Project of Rutgers University, an international project commemorating the anniversary of feminist art. The show coincided with the opening of the first permanent feminist art gallery in a major art museum, the installation of Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* and the *New Feminisms* show in adjoining gallery space at the Brooklyn Museum.

I was excited about the opportunity as I had always hoped to exhibit in Chelsea, and the topic of feminism fit some of my artwork. I prepared an entry package. I spent time on

my entry, creating a CD of the image and printing a CD case label with the image. I printed out hard copy of the image in case people wanted to see what my artwork looked like without going to the trouble of opening up a computer file. I also added my bio, printed business card, and postcards from earlier exhibitions. I organized the package into a clear plastic folder, so people could see the images immediately. I sent in my entry well before the deadline, because this created less stress on me and increased the chance that whoever was reviewing the entries would see mine before the mass of entries was received.

I entered a quilt called *Body Parts*. This work is about 50 x 50 inches and includes drawings of live models that I had done on muslin with fiber pens, along with hand-woven, hand-stamped fabric I had collected in India. My concept was to integrate images of women into textile work created by women. I was accepted into the show, and that acceptance was the beginning of a lovely relationship.

I went to Chelsea to meet Rhonda Schaller. Rhonda is an artist herself and a very experienced gallerist. She founded Ceres in 1984, a nonprofit gallery and a leader in showing art made by women. In 2006, she opened Rhonda Schaller Studio as a new alternative to the traditional art world, a collaborative commercial gallery that includes mentoring and excellence as part of its mix. This gallery is in a great building on a great street, but it is small. If my piece had been hung, it would have taken up quite a bit of wall space, and that would have been too large a commitment for just one piece. We therefore considered other options and settled on draping the piece over a chair in a corner. It looked great. I was thrilled to get an email just after the show closed

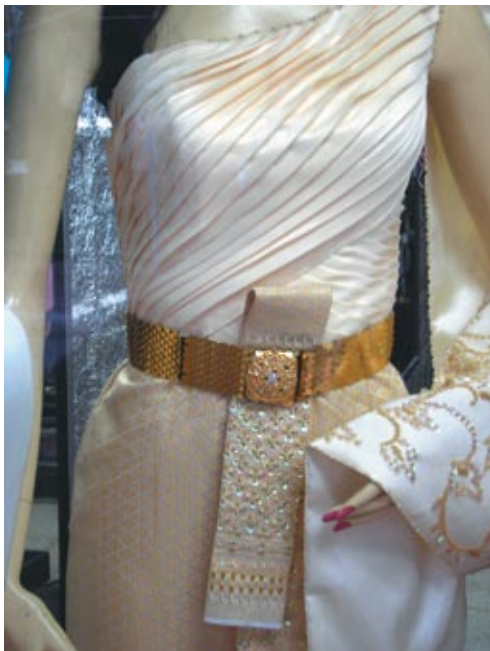
telling me that the piece had sold. It turned out that Rhonda herself had bought it. It was a great compliment to be collected by the gallery owner, and I felt very encouraged.

I made an appointment to go in and meet Rhonda again, and I brought six pieces to show her. All were 30 x 40 inches or larger. She picked one to put into the July 2006 show, *A Great Awakening*, again placed on a chair. This piece got some interest but did not sell.

In the summer of 2007, Rhonda sent out an email to all the artists who had exhibited with her, telling them about a new program she called Art Link. The purpose of the program was to establish gallery-artist relationships that were non-exclusive. Rhonda would take a special interest in the work of artists in Art Link, but artists were free to work with other galleries to promote their artwork. I applied for the program and was accepted.

For her winter show of 2007, Rhonda decided to have a small-works show, with all pieces ten inches square or smaller. Her show was called *A Small Ray of Hope and Fragments of a Larger Idea*. I had never worked that small before, but I was very interested in the possibility. Rhonda's plan was to cover the gallery with a lattice that would create a space for each individual artwork. She asked interested artists to let her know how many pieces they would submit, and I signed up for five as a challenge to myself.

Figuring out how I would handle the theme of hope was hard for me, as all the ideas that came to me readily seemed like clichés—doves, rainbows, hugs, hands. I also wanted to find a way to incorporate essential elements of my artwork, especially the use of ethnic textiles and digital images from my travels.



Clockwise from left:

Karen Maru at the opening of the Hope show at Rhonda Schaller Studio in Chelsea.

Thai wedding dress in a shop window in Phimai, Thailand.

One of the wedding pieces included in the Hope exhibition, photographed before framing.

I went in for a mentoring session with Rhonda. I appreciate her businesslike approach to mentoring. Like a therapist, she charges for her counseling time, so I felt free to take up her time focusing on my art and process. She had many recommendations, but one of her key observations was that people who buy from her gallery prefer to buy small works appropriate for their small New York apartments. They also like them framed with plexiglass so they're ready to hang. She encouraged me to add drawing to my pieces, so they would have the mark of the artist and wouldn't be "crafty." I decided to try these recommendations.

After several weeks of stewing over a theme, I remembered a series of digital images I had taken in Thailand of wedding dresses in shop windows. It suddenly occurred to me that getting married was a great act of hope, and I could make pieces using those digital images.

What I found appealing about the wedding dresses was that they combined western ideas about weddings (a white floor-length dress) with local ideas about exquisite traditional Thai formal wear (a belt, a pleated skirt,



elaborate folds). I am fascinated by the persistence of tradition even as new forms of cultural expression are adopted.

Ultimately, I made ten pieces in this series. I used Photoshop® to manipulate the images before printing them. I then went over each image several times with fabric inks. The colored images were pieced with other fabrics on which I had drawn wedding images, and the whole assemblage was quilted and embroidered. Finally, each piece was profes-

sionally framed with plexiglass.

Being a part of the Chelsea art scene has been terrific for my work and lots of fun. I was curated into the *Stories We Tell Ourselves* exhibition, which was held at the Rhonda Schaller Studio last summer. ▼

Visit Rhonda's web site at www.rhondaschallerchelsea.com.

SAQA professional artist member Karen Maru is a fiber artist living in Fairfield, Connecticut. Her web site is www.karenmaru.com.

Leslie Gabriëlse

When I entered the Art Academy in Rotterdam, I could finally please my parents with my good grades. Before that, at regular schools, my points (levels) were not that grand. I just couldn't concentrate in class. In the art school, my specialty was applied arts, which means sculpture, pottery, designs for fabric, monumental design for murals, etc. Textiles were also a part of my education, and I liked them much better than painting with oils.

Painting with oils wasn't the right thing for me. I would always want to keep working on the piece, and the oil paint always ended up muddy gray/brown. You need to stop half-way through the painting and wait to let the paint dry, or start another one. That's what I didn't like to do; I wanted to continue on one piece and finish it. The answer to my problem turned out to be commercial fabric with its color and printed or woven patterns to choose from as a palette. Drawings and sketches were the basis for each piece of mine translated into fabric.

In my family, my grandfather from my father's side was a full-time artist who did portraits and landscapes. My mother was a fashion designer. Before I went to art school, I altered my own clothing on a machine. Textiles were something I was used to working with, and I loved the feel of them.

While in school, I had no clue about quilts. Only later, when I saw an art quilt exhibition in 1985 in Los Angeles, California, did I feel a bond. My purpose was and is to use textiles instead of oil paint, while giving my work the feeling that this could be a painting and not neglecting the fact that it's made of fabric. I stitch everything by hand with yarn and Pearl Cotton thread. The stitches enhance the shapes and give the piece a vibrant look.



Someone once asked me if I had a five-year plan when I started as a full-time artist. My answer was no, it developed by itself. The only thing I plan is to arrange shows. I have to deal with the galleries' schedules, which means I have to make an appointment and then have a show two years later. I didn't think of creating a business; it all just happened.

My education trained me to deal with commissions from businesses and the private sector. In addition to commissions, from early on, I have arranged at least two or three shows a year. I have survived as a full-time artist. I have never had to have another job to support myself.

I would hereby like to thank all the buyers and collectors for their support. Most of the collectors have become my friends, and I'm pleased to see my work again each time I'm over for a glass of wine. I have to force myself not to look at my work all the time I'm there.

When I first started out, the artistic part of Rotterdam was small, and as the only artist working with fiber, I got some attention. My fellow artists and I were very lucky because the city provided studios to rent. Some school buildings were empty, and we each got a classroom. That's the main reason I stayed in this city. My classroom was nice and big. It allowed me to make big pieces with larger-than-life-

size people on them. The figures were created from my imagination.

After a day's work, we would then "paint the town." While visiting the local pubs, we'd meet other people in artistic fields—architects, writers, photographers, journalists, doctors, etc. This was my way of mingling to get the right connections. At the time I wasn't aware that I was "networking."

One time a friend, a stage actor, came to me and asked me if I would like to make a portrait of him. I wasn't sure I could handle it. Wouldn't it be easier and more logical to paint it than to make a portrait out of fabric? After thinking about it for a while, I arrived at an answer: let's make a piece with him and his two brothers since all were stage actors, and they would resemble one another in likeness and vocation. They became *The Lutz Brothers* (1975).

From that time on, I felt more secure making life-size portraits with fabric as the main medium. Later, I used different materials like charcoal and acrylic paint. For *Artists 2* (1982), the models were the painters John van 't Slot and Arie van Geest, ballet dancer Diane Coolen, and me.

In the meantime, I worked on a series of ladies, which after a couple of years totaled 26. All the figures were one-foot high and painted with watercolor. It was great fun. It all

started when I walked into the hallway where my girlfriend was fixing her stockings in front of a mirror. She wore a miniskirt and had boots on, and I could see her panties. "Wait a minute," I said and took a sketchbook and a camera to capture the moment.

Then I asked several friends if they would like to pose for me with certain items in mind. For instance, I asked Joyce, the lady who worked in a store where I bought fabrics, to model in her favorite leopard-print slip. She agreed. This gave me the idea to create a scene as though she were in a box like the ones used to make a comic strip. Her blouse is a part of the box, and the leopard I borrowed from the Tarzan comics. The result was *Joyce Klink* (1980).

In addition to my fabric pieces, I make landscape drawings from my travels, like *The Barns* (page 22). There are a total of nine drawings on this theme. On a drive through the countryside of Athens, Ohio, I had noticed

barns with tobacco advertisements painted on them. Later, in the Nov. 29, 2000 *Los Angeles Times*, there was an article about Harley Warrick, who had painted these ads all over the country. He had just passed away.

After meeting my girlfriend, who lives in Long Beach, California, I was influenced by the light and colors of California and its contemporary art. My work became more abstract. However when I get a commission with the wish to "please make it representational," I fulfill the desire with the same pleasure as making my non-representational work. Recently, more figurative elements have come back into my work.

Fullerton College, in Fullerton, California, invited me as an artist in residence for a week. This included an art gallery show and a slide presentation. During this week, I demonstrated how I build up a piece from a sketch and explained my work process to the students. For five days, they watched

See "Leslie Gabriëlse" on next page



above: *Joyce Klink*
© 1980

left: *Artists 2*
© 1982

Leslie Gabriëlse

from previous page

me and asked questions. I did not finish the piece during the residency but gave it to the school later that year. *Fullerton Flute Player* is now in their permanent collection.

Sharla Hicks from Soft Expressions, who attended the slide presentation, came to me and suggested I should send slides to *Visions* and *Quilt National*. She also introduced me to the Flying Geese quilt guild. From there, I gave several lectures and slide presentations all over California.

It's great fun for me to be able to give workshops now and then. After working in your studio by yourself, it's a nice change to meet students from all parts of the world. I don't feel like a teacher; it's more like being a guide while the students are creating their own pieces.

When I visited Santa Barbara, I noticed an art gallery called Arpel. It looked like a nice gallery in which to have a show. When I met with the gallery owner, she asked, "Do you have anything smaller?" That's what started me on my collages. I call them "Junior" due to their size. I number them with the year and then the number.

At one of my shows, a man came



The Barns

up to me and said, "I've followed you for some time. I'd like to buy the portrait of Joris Lutz, a son of one of the Lutz Brothers. You work with layers of different media. My business is publishing books. When I print books they are also in layers of colors." He kept talking and suggested I make a book about my work. When he asked, what would you like to have in the book, my reply was, "All of my work, naturally." Why be modest? Start high. But you have to understand this was too much to ask. Who would buy

such a thick book? Who would be interested in my story?

Finally, we worked out a scenario with advice from a couple of friends. It was very difficult to make choices about which pieces to put in. For me, all of them are my children, right? It caused many sleepless nights.

From the beginning of my career, my friend Eric Kievit, a commercial photographer, made professional color slides of my work. In return, I helped him build props for his commercial work. I also made a fabric



Fullerton Flute Player

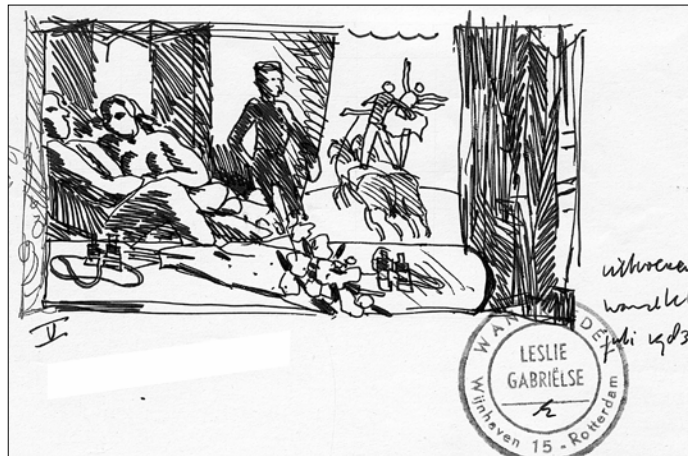


Junior 9319, 15" x 19"



above: **Piccolo**, 42" x 75" © 1983

right: Preparatory sketch for Piccolo



piece for him: *Piccolo* (1983). On this piece I used a lot of charcoal drawing and acrylic paint.

Having all the slides made it very easy to consider and reconsider my choices for the book. To finance the printing of the book, we had to find sponsors. We arranged for a campaign of four letters to be sent to a big audience. Each letter was illuminated with an extra page of an image about the progress of the serigraph that came with the book for the first 200 people who signed on.

The fun part was to make the fabric piece, *You and me III*, illustrated in the book. The whole process is a book by itself. I made step-by-step photographs as I went along. For the final layout of the book, this also meant I had to make choices of which details to include. The book became more like a biography, and the result is good. An exhibition at the Museum

of Rijswijk presented a variety of elements from the book.

Nowadays, one must create a business. My web site is mainly a business card saying, "Here I am." I don't expect sales from my web site, and I'm not working at it that way. I prefer to see and touch what I buy. I don't buy from the Internet other than books and CDs and DVDs. I like to go to the shop and buy my clothes after trying them on and feeling the fabric. I buy fabric only when I need it. There is no wall in my studio

neatly stacked with fabrics. I have plastic bags, each containing one color range.

With great pleasure, I would like to say that I'm happy being an artist, with all the ups and downs.

SAQA active member Leslie Gabriëlse is an artist and workshop teacher who lives in Rotterdam, The Netherlands. His book, **Leslie Gabriëlse: A Portrait** is available in the SAQA Store. He will be teaching a three-day workshop, *Complex Design*, at the SAQA 2009 Conference in Athens, Ohio. His web site is www.gabrielse.com.

SAQA: Oceania Art Textiles

By Sue Dennis

The SAQA: *Oceania Art Textiles* exhibition, the first exhibition of Australia and New Zealand SAQA members, will feature exciting, innovative and colorful quilts.

When the call for entry went out, the Oceania region had fewer than twenty members. Eleven members responded and entered sixteen quilts for consideration. Juror Glenys Mann selected twelve diverse pieces from

nine members.

The wide range of techniques, materials, and subject matter our art quilters are exploring today are well represented. Computer-aided design, rusted fabric, hand and machine stitching, all jostle for position among the quilts presented. Each piece is a beautiful composition with a message.

SAQA: *Oceania Art Textiles* will

debut at the Queensland Quilt Show October 22-26, 2008, Brisbane Exhibition Centre, Southbank, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia. The exhibition will then be shown at Gallery 159 in Brisbane February 7-22, 2009.

SAQA Oceania representative Sue Dennis is an art quilter and curator of SAQA: *Oceania Art Textiles*. She lives in Brisbane, Australia and her web site is www.suedennis.com.au.



Anthills—Study in Brown,
53 x 138 cm, © Sue Dennis

Reflections, 52 x 86 cm
© Wendy Lugg



Juror's Comment

As I scroll through the images that have been presented to me for the **SAQA: Oceania Art Textiles** exhibition, I am vividly reminded of how far we have travelled in the art textile/quilt world.

If these pieces were put up for selection even 10 years ago, many would have been rejected, as there were torn edges, 'untidy' stitches, lack of borders, and way too much space between the quilting lines in nearly all of these extremely interesting and diverse quilts.

The subliminal comment held within these works is always a challenge to the viewer. Read it as you will!

Although I judged these images without any names shown, I recognized work from many of the region's outstanding textile artists. I was again reminded of how they have grown in their work. I am so excited to think that there is still plenty of room for art textiles/quilts to expand and be exhibited.

I was also impressed by the quality of the images. Many a time I have had to deal with feet and fingers and even the clothesline in images from past judging experiences. This growth in the quality of the images has opened up opportunities for more textile art to be accepted and shown!

All pieces that were offered for selection were worthy of being exhibited anywhere in the world — a comment on the true talent that we have in Oceania.

*Glenys Mann
Artist, curator, and juror*

Blue Gold
98 x 90 cm
© Alison Muir



Mending Maps

75 x 104 cm

© Deborah McArdle



Meet your regional representatives

Cathy Kleeman

Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, and Washington, D.C. representative



I have dabbled in fibers since my childhood. I loved sewing, knitting, and macramé. I started with traditional quilt designs and commercial

fabrics and progressed through non-traditional work to art quilts. I have now given up commercial fabrics for fabrics with my own markings. At first, I didn't consider myself an artist because what I did was just fun. I wasn't comfortable calling myself an artist until I started showing my work in juried shows. My nametag said I was an artist, so it had to be true!

I am captivated by the surface

design process and will spend weeks making fabrics with no particular end in mind. Dyed fabrics become a background for screenprinting, painting, gelatin-plate printing, stamping, and whatever other method I can think up for adding color and visual texture. The local hardware stores are a favorite resource for patterning tools. "It's for an art project," I tell the bewildered clerks.

My work is abstract and inspired by nature's shapes and colors. Irrigation patterns seen from the air make fascinating variations on circles that must be interpreted in fabric. The sun and its warming rays appear often as the dynamic passion behind a piece. I also find inspiration in man-made objects, particularly those involving linear elements and rectangular objects. Pattern is everywhere, just waiting to be captured and manipulated. And for me, art quilts are the perfect medium.

Sandy Gregg

Massachusetts, Rhode Island co-rep



I am the daughter of an artist. It's something I tried to resist for years, focusing instead on music, until I got to college where I majored in art. I learned to sew in

junior high home economics, and my first sewing machine came from a discount store. I took my first quilting class in 1976 when I moved to Lebanon, New Hampshire, and began making sampler blocks. I gave that first sampler quilt away but continued to take classes every chance I got.

The Vermont Quilt Festival at that time was only an hour away, and every summer I drove there to take classes with Ruth McDowell, Rhoda Cohen, Sylvia Einstein, Jo Diggs, and Nancy Halpern. I joined the New England Quilters Guild and helped form the Northern Lights Quilters Guild. This increased my exposure to the work others were doing. During this time I was working full time at Dartmouth College and raising two sons by myself, but I still took classes whenever I could.

Once my sons graduated from college, I dedicated one of their bedrooms as my studio, and my productivity increased. I also survived breast cancer, which made me examine my priorities and focus my energy on quilting. I attended Art Quilt Tahoe for several years, then Quilting by the Lake and the International Quilt Festival in Houston. I found my voice as an art quilter.

In 2002 I retired from my job at Dartmouth so that I could be a full-time quilter, and I've never looked back. I moved to Cape Cod, then to Cambridge where I have found a thriving art quilt community in the Boston area. I've taken a number of dyeing and surface-design courses and now create most of my own fabric.



Moss Gold

45" x 58"

© 2007 Cathy Kleeman



Spring Fizz, 53" x 53", © 2007 Sandy Gregg



Brazilian Curves
17" x 13", © 2007 Jeanne Marklin

I love working with color. I often leave work on the wall for a long time waiting for inspiration, and I work on many pieces simultaneously. I still take workshops and attend as many quilt exhibits as I can.

I've just had my first pieces accepted into the *Tactile Architecture* exhibit at Houston and the Brush Gallery in Lowell, and I recently won second place at the *Fabric of Legacies* exhibit in Colorado. Someday, I hope to get a piece into *Quilt National*. Meanwhile, I'm looking forward to getting to know other SAQA members and seeing their art quilts face-to-face.

Jeanne Marklin

Massachusetts, Rhode Island co-rep



In high school home economics classes, I enjoyed learning to make clothes but thought the sewing machine was expected to stop working every 15 minutes, requiring the teacher's attention. After a couple of unfinished skirts, I

decided sewing wasn't for me. I continued to love art and tried a variety of mediums until I became passionate about photography. I studied photography, film, and video at UCSD, and after graduation was a professional photojournalist for eight years.

When our children were young, my husband travelled regularly for work, and having a more predictable schedule became important to me. I earned an MSW and worked as a clinical social worker for twelve years, treating abused children in foster care.

In 1994, I took a "Quilt in a Day" class and was hooked on learning to make quilts. Despite the fact that I put the needle through my finger in the class, I realized that sewing machines aren't that finicky and I just needed to learn about them. At the time, I lived in Silver Spring, Maryland, and was able to take many classes with excellent teachers through the local guild, Nimble Fingers. Members generously mentored me and shared their knowledge. I've been able to learn from so many talented quilt artists. Ricky Tims' class on cutting without a ruler freed me to work in very different ways and to ignore many of the rules of quilting.

I sold art quilts through a home show that our small quilt group organized in my old neighborhood. It was very gratifying to have people excited about my work and interested in purchasing more. Money and admiration are great motivators!

We moved to Williamstown, Massachusetts two years ago, and I am in the process of converting a small barn on our property into a studio. I look forward to many years of learning more in the studio, through interactions with SAQA members, and continuing to take workshops. I have been juried into the *National Small Art* exhibition for two years in a row, published in the *Creative Quilting* book, and I won a second place award at a local quilt show. As I journey down this path, I am honored to be a co-rep for SAQA, sharing the responsibility with Sandy Gregg.

Board report from page 3

all future conferences. So look forward to chances to meet others at SAQA's upcoming 20th Anniversary Conference in 2009 in Athens, Ohio, and the 2010 conference to be held in northern California. Do you have ideas for networking during our conferences? Pass them along.

We also see it as our mission to spend SAQA money wisely, stretching your membership dues as far as we can. As paper costs continue to rise, we're keeping our eye on printing costs and exploring digital alternatives to printing. For example, Deidre Adams produced a marvelous digital presentation to promote the *12 Voices* exhibition. We're also hoping to make it easier for you to enter SAQA shows digitally, to realize savings for you as well as the environment.

Think about your membership. We hope your expectations are being met. If they're not, what are your ideas for how we can improve? Let your local reps know, or write a board member directly. You'll find our email addresses at www.saqa.com. Click *About SAQA*, then *Board of Directors*.

Seller Beware from page 5

artist on my email list.

That didn't stop them right away. "Jeff" called a couple of times a day for two more days. I put him off by saying I was just waiting to hear from my bank that their check had cleared. When I asked for his phone number so I could call him when the check cleared, he hung up. Then "Nicki" emailed again, saying she hoped I'd hurry and send them the artwork.

As a result of this experience, I urge you to be very careful when approached about your artwork via email. We hear so many stories of fabulous sales made by means of web site discoveries, and I certainly hope those are the majority. But there are a few bad folks out there who prey upon anyone they can. These crooks ended up getting nothing from me, but I know artists are vulnerable as we work alone and are thrilled to make a sale. Please spread the word. ▼

SAQA professional artist member Deborah Weir is a textile artist who lives in Rolling Hills Estates, California. Her web site is www.deborahweir.net.

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Kiwi lecture tour

Impressions in words, colors, and patterns

By Karen Eckmeier

Thanks to the success of Quilt Symposium Manawatu in 2007, coordinator Dianne Southey and her committee decided to thank the Kiwi Patchers (New Zealand quilters/fiber artists) for their support by inviting an international teacher on a lecture tour in 2008. Much to my delight, I was the fortunate recipient of this generous offer. I was asked to present two full-day workshops on my “Accidental Landscapes” (layered topstitching) and “Happy Villages” (fabric collage) designs along with 12 two-hour lecture/demonstrations on the techniques I use.

The comprehensive itinerary included both islands of New Zealand, starting at the top of the North Island and progressing southward to the tip of the South Island. With all expenses paid, how could I have said no? Since the lectures were scheduled in the evenings and were usually spaced a day or two apart, my husband and I had plenty of time for exploring and tramping (hiking). As far as scenery goes, New Zealand truly has it all: hot springs, volcanoes,

beaches, lakes, wild rivers, fjords, and snow-capped mountains. We learned to identify the manuka tree (tea tree), cabbage trees, toi toi, punga (fern trees), flax and norfolk pine. Coming home with almost 2,000 digital photos, I have inspiration to last me a lifetime. The sketchbook diary that I had packed to capture plants and scenery does indeed include a few renderings; however, words and patterns seem to fill the pages instead.

As we traveled, we strolled through parks and the bush trails, enjoyed green-lipped mussels and chook (chicken), ate hokey pokey ice cream, shopped at dairy (convenience) stores with our trolleys (shopping carts). We learned that a Tui is not only a bird, but the preferred beer of the North Island, whereas Speights beer is the pride of the South Island. These cultural differences are important to know.

I foresee many New Zealand-inspired fiber art pieces in my future. I decided to make the format of the first of these a giant postage stamp. *Stamped in my Memory*, a spontaneous

graphic impression of the new words and patterns I encountered on my trip, was the result. Each of the four panels is separated by a black-and-white print fabric typical of Maori designs. The Maori are “the original people” from Polynesia who were first to settle in New Zealand.

As I traveled from North Island to South Island, the bush telegraph (local grapevine) was evidently busy humming with news about my lecture/demonstration. I received a warm welcome at every venue. New Zealand quilters and fiber artists are an extremely talented group. They are more than willing to try a new idea and then twist it to give it their own unique touch. Their enthusiasm at my lectures was energizing, and they were always ready to “give it a go,” which is exactly what they have been doing since I left.

Not only are the New Zealand quilters and fiber artists creating beautiful landscapes inspired by their dramatic surroundings, they are also teaching their children how to create

See “Kiwi” on page 31



above: Happy Villages workshop in Palmerston North, New Zealand

left: *Stamped in my Memory*, 19" x 19", © 2008 Karen Eckmeier

Series from page 9

material, then the fur really flies! Start, stop, cut up, discard, start again.

And then, finally, I make a piece about the Boundary Waters that says “Here is freedom, peace, adventure, the smallness and brevity of humans, the greatness of eternal Nature.” And that piece, combined with the fabric I have already dialogued with in its painting, will start the series off. I go forward exploring, explaining, experimenting, feeling, thinking, pushing, narrating, and summarizing.

I develop series that aren’t just about what you see before you in terms of shape and color and structure, but about what’s behind the physical presence. This could be the figure behind the screen, the archetypes lurking in the shadows, or the emotion I’m holding close to my heart. This is expressed through the philosophical and personal meaning I’ve attached to certain colors and images which may attract, intrigue or hold the viewer for reasons entirely different from the ones I felt in the

Pricing from page 15

twenty to fifty percent. For instance, you may have previously sold pieces for \$600 each in private or non-commission transactions, and now you have an opportunity to sell similar pieces at an art center or gallery. If the gallery takes a thirty percent commission, you need to set the asking price of new pieces at \$860 in order to earn your established amount. This means that you’ll need to raise your prices, but you must never undersell the gallery. When you enter a gallery relationship, you’re mounting your artwork in their establishment, and they’re working to arrange sales and promote your identity. Selling artwork in the same series or similar work privately at a lower price during the same period is unethical and undermines both of you.

Although a friend or family member may try to convince you that giving a discount to certain people is common, it ultimately works

making. This is real power; this is real art.

Third Thoughts ran out of gas as a series because I couldn’t find the intellectual or emotional thread that would tie the pieces together, that would make my investment in time and energy worthwhile. I started without considering what exactly I was trying to say, what would pull me along to make more, to try more, to *have* to create. I was seduced by assuming that my thinking was already done in the paper collages.


A series works when I am passionate about the topic, when I have something to say that is both personal and profound. This stirs my emotions, tickles my brain, makes me wrestle with myself or my materials. In every case, I am driven to be in the studio and to try. Perhaps not always to succeed, but to try. ▼

SAQA active member Virginia A. Spiegel is a mixed-media artist living in Byron, Illinois. Her web site is www.virginiaspiegel.com.

against you. Susan Sanborn North emphasizes, “Never discount the retail price for anyone, not even your own mother. You can give it away or donate it to charity, but never sell your work for less than your original price.” If you have sold artwork in a gallery, and you then later sell work yourself, you are entitled to charge the full price including the commission. According to Caryl Bryer Fallert, “If you’ve found your own client and done your own marketing and client interaction, then you need to pay yourself for all of these things.”

Cindy Friedman, an artist and also co-director of the *ArtQuilt Elements* exhibition, suggests that “Your own sales may be a good way to gauge whether or not you’re in the ballpark for appropriate pricing. If everything you make sells immediately, you’re probably under priced. However, if you never sell anything, it’s more difficult to interpret, as it may be

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an indication that your artwork is overpriced, or that it’s not good work, or that it’s simply not in the right outlet.”

Friedman notes that because women are taught to undervalue their work, it may be beneficial to slightly overvalue the work as an offset method. Carol Taylor and others have noticed that some artists sell more work after raising their prices.

To summarize, start with realistic expectations, research the art market, calculate expenses, and consider your selling record. When in doubt, consult an experienced artist, curator, or fiber art dealer. You’ll be able to determine your prices with a strategy instead of a shot in the dark. ▼

SAQA active member Elizabeth Van Schaick is a fiber artist and a faculty member at the Fleisher Art Memorial in Philadelphia. She lives in Wayne, Pennsylvania, and her web site is www.elizabethvs.com.

To publish from page 8

through wholesalers and book distributors. Because they also take on the responsibility of warehousing and invoicing, you don't have the "books in the garage" syndrome.

And perhaps the nicest advantage is the ego trip you get when someone else thinks you're good enough to be published.

The disadvantages are few but important. First, you probably won't make much money from your book. Most books published never pay more than the advance, because the book doesn't sell enough copies. Say for example your book is priced at \$25. Most sales occur at 55% off the retail price, so this means the net price of your book is \$11.25. You get 12% of net sales. So, for every book sold to a retail store, you would receive \$1.35. To make up an advance of \$5,000, you would need to sell 3,704 books. To make \$50,000 per year, you would need to have the publisher sell more than 37,000 books per year. I doubt

whether many titles reach that level.

The other disadvantage is the loss of control over the cover, price, and internal design—maybe even the title—of your book. The publisher generally has final say on those issues and may make decisions that do not present your work in the way that you would like. ▼

Editor's note: Part 2 of this series will continue this topic with a discussion of self-publishing. Look for it in the next issue of the SAQA Journal.

SAQA active member Carol Ann Waugh has spent her entire career in the publishing industry. She co-authored 3 books on quilting in the late 1970s and early 80s, during the bicentennial-induced quilting renaissance. She also wrote a book on roller skating, but that's another story. Carol started and sold two publishing companies. Today, she earns her living as a publishing consultant and is developing a career as an artist. She is a co-rep for Colorado, Wyoming and Utah. Her web site is www.carolwaughquilts.com.

Kiwi from page 29

Happy Villages in both fabric and paper. A primary school teacher in Rotorua sent me photos of her 9- and 10-year-old students making villages out of colored construction paper and crayons. Quite impressive!

The words may be new and the meanings slightly different, but the language of colors, shapes and lines is universal. Our world knows no boundaries when we can all speak the same "language." How lucky we are as artists that we are able to communicate in this manner.

SAQA professional artist member Karen Eckmeier is an award winning fiber artist, teacher and author. Her latest book, Accidental Landscapes (2008), uses her layered topstitching technique to "accidentally" create luscious fabric landscapes. Happy Villages (2007) demonstrates her approach to collaging step and window shapes that mysteriously evolve into unique villages. She lives in Kent, Connecticut, and her web site is www.quilted-lizard.com.

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

The SAQA Journal is published four times a year. E-mail articles to editor Carolyn Lee Vehslage at clvquilts@yahoo.com.

Deadlines for articles:

Summer: February 1

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