

# SAQA *Journal*

Studio Art Quilt Associates, Inc. ▲▲▲ Volume 19, No. 2 ▲▲▲ Spring 2009



photo by F. Alfredo Rego

## **Spring Thaw** by Leslie Rego

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## Thoughts from the president

by Judith Content



**A**s I write my *SAQA Journal* report, the colors in my autumn garden are simply wonderful. I collect Japanese maples and they are currently a riot of fiery hues.

I recently painted the garden walls a deep shade of garnet and the contrast with the glowing maple leaves and a fuchsia bougainvillea is magical, if momentary.

Here inside my studio it's easy to tell another year is coming to a close. How so? My 'inspiration wall' is virtually full. Over the year it gradually becomes a dense mosaic of compelling imagery, vibrant color, and intriguing design. In January 2009, it will be taken down to begin all over again.

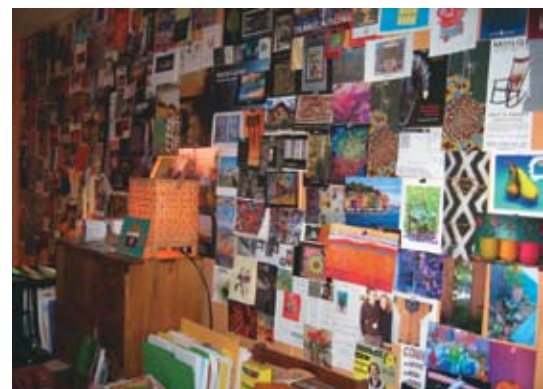
My inspiration wall started when I removed a malfunctioning wall heater from my studio, thus leaving a huge gaping hole. I covered the hole with cork, but this was almost as ugly as the hole. I looked around for something to cover the cork and reached for a basket of artist's postcards, exhi-

bition announcements, and images from magazines.

I attached the papers to the wall with push pins, overlapping the edges to totally obscure the cork. After that, as postcards came my way, they went up on the wall. These accompanied pictures from trips, business cards, magazine pages—anything and everything that inspired me. The effect was a wonderful collage of images, a profusion of ephemera—the sorts of things collected and all too often forgotten.

A year later the wall was full. Completely covered. I considered what to do. I could start covering other studio walls. I did have two more, not counting my design wall. Or I could start another layer—a colorful sedimentary deposit of the vertical sort. Or I could take it all down, pack it away in a box and completely start over with a blank canvas. I now have eight boxes filled to the brim with art and inspiration.

From time to time I pull out a box and reminisce. Sometimes I cull the boxes for collage materials or to find a lost address. Usually, I note a dis-



tinctive design element that ties that year together. This year the unifying element is a color—deep tangerine. It turns up in the stitched leaves on a postcard from Peg Keeney, as well as the rippling surface treatment of *Horizon VII* by Deidre Adams. A postcard of Regina Benson's *Pele* reverberates with carnelian and black. Postcards given to me by Robin Cowley, Carol Larson, Catherine Kleeman, Katherine Allen, Charlotte Ziebarth, Linda Gass, Connie Rohman, Kathy Weaver, and Patty Hawkins (to mention just a few) glow with cadmium.

Soon I'll take down my 2008 inspiration wall and pack it away. I'll miss its vibrant warmth. However, I'm looking forward to discovering what 2009 holds in terms of art and inspiration, and I hope that many wonderful postcards continue to come my way.

## Board report

by Penny McMorris

**I**n our last *Journal*, I asked you to think about your membership: what you got from it and what you wanted to get. Here's a short list of some of your requests, and how we're responding:

You wanted SAQA to exhibit more in museums. The exhibition committee is hard at work getting venues for *12 Voices* and other exhibitions at museums, higher end galleries, and art centers. I continue to be incredibly impressed by how hard the exhibition committee works and how many possibilities they offer for you

to exhibit your artwork.

You wanted more workshops and more networking opportunities at conferences. The upcoming *Art & Excellence* conference (May 21-24) will offer lots of both. You can choose from the list of timely mini-workshop presentations as well as from six practical, in-depth art workshops taking place before the conference (May 18-20).

You wanted a chance to choose your region. You can now select a second state or country to "belong" to as part of your member profile. For

example, if you live in Indiana just over the border from Illinois, you can select Illinois as your second state and receive SAQA news from Illinois as well as Indiana.

You wanted a board that was responsive to you. Now, contacting the board is easier than ever. Write to [board@saqa.com](mailto:board@saqa.com). If you forget that address, go to [www.saqa.com](http://www.saqa.com) > About SAQA > Board of Directors, and find the contact link there. We want to hear from you.

I look forward to seeing many of you in May at *Art & Excellence*.

# Report from the SAQA executive director

by Martha Sielman



**T**hanksgiving is next week, and I've been reflecting on how thankful I am to be working for such an incredibly generous community.

Studio Art Quilt Associates depends on the donations of its members: donations not only of money and auction artwork, but of time, energy, creativity, resourcefulness, and care. In 2008, SAQA reached almost 2,300 members in 30 countries, worked with SDA to put on a fantastic conference, and created and managed 14 exhibitions. We printed and distributed four exhibition catalogs, four quarterly *Journals* and the *PAM Portfolio*. Members staffed information booths at six major events and participated in a dizzying variety of regional events.

All of this activity and achievement was possible because of the

dedication of our volunteers. The twelve volunteers who make up the SAQA board guide the organization, plan the budget, plan the exhibition calendar, evaluate opportunities, and develop new initiatives. Our 40 regional representatives work tirelessly to reach out to their local members through newsletters, meetings, exhibitions, and regional conferences, as well as manage the SAQA booths at the big quilt festivals and other events.

Members of the exhibition committee plan and manage all of the SAQA exhibitions, have developed a new online entry process, and are in the process of creating step-by-step lessons for using various types of digital imaging software. Volunteer administrators and curators coordinate the minutiae required to put on each exhibition.

Our *Journal* editor volunteers her time to create the content for our quarterly issues. Our art director gives her time to design and update our

advertising, business cards, stationery, etc. Our *Portfolio* editor volunteers as manager of our marketing efforts, ably assisted by our press release writer. Our web site coordinator and our web site calendar coordinator keep the web site up to date and fresh. The SAQA-U committee does the same for SAQA-U so that we have an incredible resource available to us at all times.

Whenever there's a need for a volunteer, whether to create a survey, proofread *Journal* articles, or staff a SAQA booth, SAQA members are there giving their time, energy, and expertise. And of course, my thanks go out to all of the members who donated auction artwork, including the twelve members who created the beautiful artwork for our *Art Gallery in a Box IV* auction at the *Art & Excellence* conference in May.

SAQA could not prosper without the efforts and dedication of its wonderful volunteers. Thank you all very much!

## Meet your new treasurer: Nelda Warkentin



**B**efore accepting a position on the board, I was SAQA's Alaska representative for many years. The skills I bring to the board include

my artist's perspective, as well as organization and management skills acquired in my previous career as a community planner and programs manager for the State of Alaska.

When I was starting out as an art quilter, SAQA offered me encouragement, direction, and useful information. Getting to know others at the

conferences was especially rewarding, and it still is. I am glad I have this opportunity to give back to an organization that has been so helpful.

In 1995, I took a design class at the Museum of History and Art in Anchorage. It connected me with a group of fiber artists who inspired me to become an art quilter. After taking art classes at the University of Alaska Anchorage and numerous workshops around the United States, I developed my unique style of working, which I call "layered paintings."

In 1997, jurors started selecting my quilts for national and international shows. My artwork has been juried into *Quilt National* and *Quilt Visions*

eleven times. I have also exhibited in *ArtQuilt Elements* and was invited to create artwork for SAQA's *Art Gallery in a Box III*.

Numerous galleries, museums, and other venues, including the U.S. Embassies in Moscow and Cape Town, have chosen and displayed my artwork. Other quilts are in public, private, and corporate collections.

I create my abstract artwork in two studios—one in a condo in Anchorage, and another in the attic of a 150-year-old farmhouse in western Maine. To learn more about my artwork, please visit my web site at [www.neldawarkentin.com](http://www.neldawarkentin.com).

## From the editor

by Carolyn Lee Vehslage



**W**e have another *SAQA Journal* jam-packed with articles to help us develop as artists in the field of art quilting. I want to thank Jean Judd and Rita Han-

nafin who helped me to polish this issue.

I've enjoyed listening to the SAQA-U mentorship calls that Lisa Chipetine has so wonderfully scheduled for us. V Kingsley gave such a strong presentation on how she uses video to document her commissioned artwork that I thought it would make a great article. To hear V in her own words, go to [www.saqau.wikispaces.net](http://www.saqau.wikispaces.net), log on with your ID and pass-

word, select Mentorship Forums from the left side menu, and scroll down to Completed Calls section. While on that page, you can see what Lisa has lined up for the future.

Julia A. Pfaff has a thoughtful opinion piece on how we classify our work. She asks us to consider three distinct categories: quilts presented as art, quilts made as art, and art made in a quilt medium. In her research for the article, she surveyed artists from three well-known art quilt exhibitions to find out what they call themselves and how they define their work. The results show how we all struggle to come to terms with who we are and what we do.

One of our international members, Tove Pirajá Hansen, shares her experience in getting corporate sponsorship

to fund her travel to the 2008 SAQA Europe's Wide Horizons exhibition in Alsace, France.

Joyce Hanlon gives us insight into her search for good studio space. We can learn a lot from her journey from one space, to another, to the final haven she found.

I'm always interested in stories of how artists develop their artwork, and how SAQA has aided them. Bonnie J. Smith tells us how she came up with her award winning design, and then how she converted it from a wall hanging to a functional purse. Casey Puetz shares all the exciting opportunities that her first year of SAQA membership has brought her. If you have a story of your artistic journey, please contact me at [clvquilts@yahoo.com](mailto:clvquilts@yahoo.com).

## Letter to the editor

*Michael A. Cummings*  
[www.michaelcumplings.com](http://www.michaelcumplings.com).

After reading Clairan Ferrono's article "Art in Embassies" in the Fall 2008 issue of the SAQA Journal, I had to stop and reflect on her smooth process from beginning to end. My experience with the Embassies Art Program was more like an endurance test. Artists submit images of artwork to the program, and then the staff attempts to match artwork with a country or a particular ambassador's art interests. I worked with a staff member, not a curator as Clairan had.

Once the art was selected, I had to get serious with negotiating the deal. First, I was expected to be "flexible" with my prices, meaning the program has a limited budget and it expects a

wholesale price. After sweating that first hurdle, I had to go to their various web sites that provide business forms and federal descriptions for procurement of the artwork. There were mountains of forms that only a federal bureaucracy could produce.

Some of the items that were required on the invoice were company name, invoice number, Duns number, contract number, order number, line item number, description of each artwork, social security number, shipping terms, and payment terms. Unlike Clairan, I didn't have an art shipper contact me. It was my responsibility to send the artwork to their office. After creating this

paper trail (almost like making a crazy quilt) and meeting all requirements, I felt like I had reached the finish line in a marathon, and won!

There is also a loan plan within the Embassies Art Program, where rather than buying the artwork, you are asked to lend it for a certain time period. Lending art may entail less paperwork; however, I had doubts about the treatment and conditions of how artwork would be handled, so I prefer to sell rather than lend my art.

In spite of the work my experience entailed, I would like to urge SAQA members to take advantage of this exciting opportunity.

# Art & Excellence

by Nelda Warkentin

Hopefully by now, you have registered for SAQA's *Art & Excellence* conference to be held in Athens, Ohio, May 21-24, 2009. The conference will be an exciting opportunity to network with your peers, learn from talented teachers and a variety of speakers, and experience the *Quilt National '09* exhibition.

Highlights of the conference will include keynote speakers Dr. Don Bacigalupi and Alyson B. Stanfield. Dr. Don Bacigalupi is president, director, and CEO of the Toledo Museum of Art in Ohio. He will speak on "Contemporary Art & Studio Quilting: A Museum Director's Perspective." Alyson B. Stanfield, founder of ArtBizCoach.com, is an artist advocate, art marketing consultant, and author of *I'd Rather Be in the Studio! The Artist's No-Excuse Guide to Self-Promotion*. She will answer the question, "What happens once they click?"

The conference will offer mini-workshops, panel discussions, and networking opportunities while celebrating SAQA's 20th anniversary. Attendees will be able to participate in a critique group led by Sandra Sider. I attended a critique session at the 2007 conference. The guidance given and the critiques of individual works were enlightening. The critique session was also a great opportunity to participate in a focused discussion with one's peers, to learn from that process, and to get to know one another better. I'm looking forward to participating in the critique session at next May's conference.

Other mini-workshop sessions will offer information on photographing art quilts and preparing the digital images, pricing, sales and commissions, time management, self-publishing, and innovative marketing.

In addition to the instructional sessions, the 2009 conference will offer three panel discussions: The *Quilt National '09* jurors will discuss their

decision-making, offering insights into how and why the 2009 selections were made. Another panel will offer advice on how to look beyond what you're doing today with your art. A third panel will look at SAQA's history and future.

The *Quilt National* banquet, breaks between conference sessions, and "down time" will provide participants with numerous opportunities to network with other SAQA members.

During our first evening together participants will share information about themselves in a fun exercise called "artist speed dating." The session will allow attendees to meet each other early on, making it easier for people to connect during the conference.

## Workshops, May 18-20

Six comprehensive art workshops offer additional skill-building opportunities. For those of you who want to further expand your horizons and skills, three-day workshops with in-depth training will be held earlier in the week (May 18-20) at the Dairy Barn Arts Center and the University of Ohio in Athens. Classes are being offered in shibori, silk and textile painting, PhotoShop for artists, complex design, art and design fundamentals, and color mastery.

## Questions

If you have questions about the conference, visit the Art & Excellence conference web site at [www.saqa.com/newsebulletins/conf09.aspx](http://www.saqa.com/newsebulletins/conf09.aspx), or contact our conference coordinator, Desi Vaughn ([desiree.vaughn@elkrapidsnet.com](mailto:desiree.vaughn@elkrapidsnet.com) or 231-409-2581).

I look forward to seeing you in Athens next May. ▼

*SAQA board member and Art & Excellence conference planning committee chair Nelda Warkentin is an artist living in Anchorage, Alaska. Her web site is [www.neldawarkentin.com](http://www.neldawarkentin.com).*



## Miscellany

60" x 21"

© Erin Wilson

Photo courtesy of Quilt National 2009

## Evolution of an exhibition

by Carol Watkins

The *Don't Fence Me In* exhibition was developed by a group of innovative art quilters, asserting their collective creative energy to produce an eclectic themed quilt exhibition.

I am a member of Piecemakers, an art quilt critique group in the Boulder-Denver area of Colorado. The group was formed about 20 years ago and meets monthly for personal and artistic enrichment. The current group of 12 women has been together for about 10 years. Another critique group, Quilt Explorations, was invited to join us for this exhibition. They have nine members, two of whom are also in Piecemakers. Marta Amundsen, a Wyoming quilter whose artwork often focuses on western themes, was also invited and participated in the exhibition.

### How the idea evolved

In the cold, post-holiday days of January, the Piecemakers go on an

annual retreat for 3 or 4 days. For the last couple of years, the members of Quilt Explorations have been invited to join us. We rent a large house outside Rocky Mountain National Park. The purpose of the retreat is to share our personal and artistic joys and sorrows. We drink wine in front of a roaring fire, eat delicious meals, and hike in the clear, cold mountain air. We bask in the beauty of our surroundings. The days are filled with a variety of activities such as quilting, beading, exchanging knowledge and techniques, sharing books, and totally enjoying being together. During the retreat of 2006, we challenged ourselves to develop a new exhibition.

Piecemakers had previously mounted an invitational show that traveled for five years. The *Potluck* exhibition was viewed across the United States from 2002 to 2007, sponsored by a national exhibition organization.

Several themes for the new exhibition were considered, but the one that resonated was "Don't fence me in." With that phrase came a sense of excitement that drove us to free-associate every possible meaning of the expression, including cows, feminism, and the environment.

The "Don't fence me in" concept is not a strictly western theme, but it's intrinsic to the American psyche, and most certainly in the artists' psyches. We are migrants to Colorado, to the West, bringing our hopes, dreams, ambitions, and talents to this beautiful and challenging environment. As artists, we look to expand our horizons, challenge ourselves, take our art in new directions, and combine materials and processes not known to our grandmothers and their quilting experience.

### The artists and the quilts

Each artist was encouraged to interpret the subject matter as she chose. Tremendous variety is evident in the 60+ quilts that emerged from 19 artists. The "Don't fence me in" concept was taken both literally and metaphorically.

The quilts fall into broad categories: the West of indigenous people; homesteading, settlers, cowboys and cowgirls, flora, fauna, landscape, and the Western environment. Some are humorous or whimsical, while others are serious or express pathos. They are both realistic and abstract.

### Exhibiting the quilts

The Longmont Museum & Cultural Center in Longmont, Colorado, provided their exhibition galleries for the



*Cattle Brand I* 24" x 24"  
© 2007 Faye Anderson



Left: **Homestead**, 24" x 24", © 2007 Barbara Cohen



Right: **Gunfight at Potato Canyon**, 24" x 24", ©2007 Gay Lasher

exhibit. The Museum staff collaborated in promoting the exhibition and did an exemplary job of hanging the artwork, using natural split-log fencing for some of the quilts. The opening was promoted through postcards, email, and the Museum's newsletter.

The enthusiasm with which the exhibition was greeted encouraged us to try to take the show on the road. We had a brainstorming session and came up with a list of venues to approach. Judith Trager took on the task of calling, emailing, or writing the venues to make initial contact. If there was interest, I followed up by sending a CD with images of the quilts.

Three additional venues have been scheduled so far; others may be forthcoming. Exhibitions are often scheduled a year or more ahead. Occasionally a slot might open up unexpectedly, and we may be able to take advantage of that opportunity. We have a good reputation, and exhibition directors know we will pack the quilts carefully, ship quilts and materials in a timely way, and provide publicity. We can also schedule workshops and lectures.

*Don't Fence Me In* is currently scheduled for these venues:

Kansas City Public Library in Kansas City, Kansas, May-July 2009, during the "Off the Grid" Surface Design Association conference

South Dakota Art Museum in Brookings, South Dakota, September 2009 – January 2010

Kimball Art Center in Park City, Utah, February-March 2010.

If you are interested in booking this exhibition, contact [carol@carolwatkins.com](mailto:carol@carolwatkins.com). ▼

*SAQA professional artist member Carol Watkins is a fiber artist living in Boulder, Colorado. Her web site is [www.carolwatkins.com](http://www.carolwatkins.com).*



**Purple Sky**  
23" x 24"  
© 2007 Carol Watkins

## Susan McCraw

The inspiration for my first quilt was a fashion writer's descriptive term, "carwash skirt." "Aha!" I thought, "I know exactly what she means: those swingy, vertical strips of fabric that swish across the windshield in the automatic carwash." The image of those strips had been fixed in my memory twenty years earlier, when my toddler son issued endless pleas to "go again" through the sudsy gauntlet of the carwash. He would scream all the way through, in feigned terror, at the noise and action. I don't believe he understood that the trips had any more practical objective than a roller coaster ride.

When I began making art quilts, I had been reading books about quilting for several years. My first exposure to quilts had been a visit to an exhibition at the Museum of American Textile History in Lowell, Massachusetts. The pieces in the show belonged to a New York collector. Although I didn't appreciate it at the time, they were superb examples of the medium. Most of them had traditional patterns. They were from Japan and other countries, as well as the United States. All of the makers had sophisticated taste and I wondered whether I might actually be able to create something so exquisite.

I knew I had three skills that would serve me well as an art quilter. First, I could sew. I had made many of my children's clothes and curtains for our homes. Second, I knew a lot about the indigenous cultures of Africa and Asia from my days as a graduate student in history. The textiles of these cultures would become one of the main inspirations for my quilts. Third, I had plenty of experience in organizing tasks. I had coordinated five long-distance moves for our household.

I graduated from Harvard Law School in 1978, and I began practic-



Susan McCraw with *Regalia*, 45" x 24", © 2003

ing law in a downtown Boston firm. After 15 years, I resigned my partnership and began to disengage from my law practice. By 1995, I had started to collect a supply of fabrics with the "carwash skirt" in the back of my mind. I was accumulating prints of automobiles and traffic. I had no idea how I would build the design for a representational quilt, or indicate the frenetic activity of the carwash machines.

I began by making two small patchwork quilts with artsy touches in value gradation and palette. Then, I created an original scene, hand appliquéd, of five geese flying across the night sky. I learned a lot from that time-consuming process, but the result was not as successful as I had hoped. I modified the design and colors and tried again. When the second version also proved disappointing, I knew that it was time to look for help.

Help came from three sources. First, I joined a group of quilters who met once a week with an instructor in an

organization called Harvard Neighbors in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The 20 quilters in this group were from five or six countries, some rank beginners, others quite experienced. In their company, I learned how to draft patterns, make and use templates, and how to piece, appliqué, and quilt by hand. We worked with a large number of traditional quilt designs. Although I seldom use those patterns and processes now, the experience gave me a solid grounding in the fundamentals of quilt construction. It also taught me a standard of care best expressed as, "almost right is wrong." I stayed in the Harvard Neighbors group for four years and was an instructor for the last three.

My second source of help came from the school of the DeCordova Museum in Lincoln, Massachusetts. There, I completed two courses in color and design taught by Linda S. Perry, an accomplished professional art quilter. She is a meticulous teacher who uses fabric, rather than paint or pastels, as the medium for her



**Carwash**, 82" x 54", © 1996

exercises and projects. It was in those courses that I heard the wonderful phrase "economy of means," which means finding the smallest possible number of forms and lines to make the artistic statement that you want a particular work to convey. For me, it has meant learning to edit my visual expressions in the same manner as a written work, leaving only the best rendition of each element in the composition, and cutting out any bells and whistles that could distract the viewer from my essential artistic message.

The third source of help came as an "Aha" moment: I realized that I was not thinking like an artist. I had been going through life describing and narrating scenes and events in words rather than picturing them. I needed to develop a mental vocabulary of images that could be interpreted in my artwork.

As it turned out, much of that vocabulary came from *HALI*, an elegant magazine directed to collectors of antique Oriental rugs. I first saw an issue of *HALI* at the home of a friend. It was gorgeous; full of color photos on heavy, slick paper. There were fascinating articles about where carpets have been produced by hand for centuries: the Middle East, Central Asia, Africa, and the Orient. These were the very realms that had filled my imagination ever since my study of African and Asian history. Seeing news and pictures of the peoples who lived there, and their works, was like greeting old friends.

*HALI's* "Auction Prices Report" quickly showed me that I couldn't afford to become a collector myself, but I could spare \$200 a year to subscribe to the magazine. Along with its hundreds of images, *HALI* provides more resources: books to buy or borrow from a library, dealers to visit, exhibitions and conferences to attend. These became the well-spring of my working stock of motifs and compositions. As an unanticipated bonus, my friend gave me his

entire collection of back issues of the magazine.

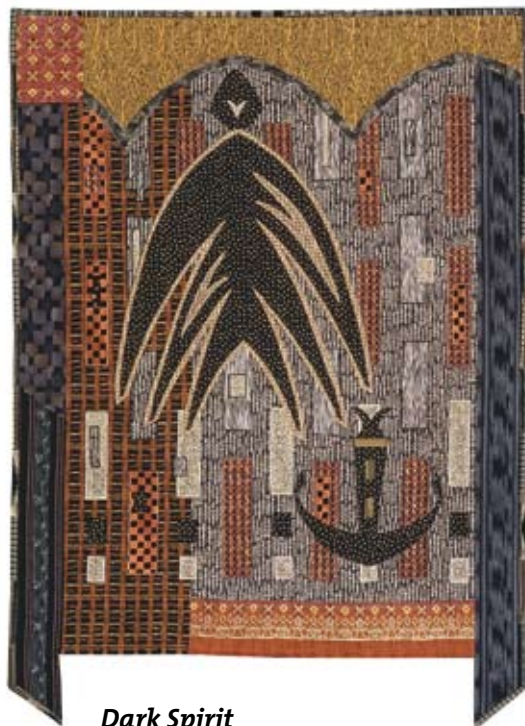
The layout for my *Carwash* quilt was developed from the influence of *HALI*, the hand-quilting group, and my DeCordova Museum school courses. It would be a double medalion rug arrangement. Two central squares set on point would contain appliqued images of cars entering and exiting the carwash. Along the two vertical sides would be rows of smaller squares conveying impressions from the carwash corridor. Shapes and lines in the background would indicate water spraying, draining away, and the motions of the washing machines.

When *Carwash* received awards from the judges at several regional shows, it dawned on me that I was becoming a legitimate art quilter. I joined Quilters' Connection (QC), the grandmother of New England guilds. There, I gained access to the wisdom of 200 quilters of all ages, backgrounds, and styles, as well as speakers and workshop presenters of national stature. I kept expanding my visions of ethnic textiles.

Through contacts in QC and the DeCordova Museum school, I helped to form a critique group, New Wrinkle, which has been going strong for nearly seven years. Our six members work individually in a variety of styles. We meet once a month to give and receive advice on techniques, products, work in progress, and opportunities for shows and sales. Since 2004, we have mounted more than a dozen shows in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

From the beginning, my primary goal as an art quilter was to develop a coherent body of work. As I progressed, the need to construct quilts in a way that would satisfy my standards of execution and be completed in a reasonable amount of time became apparent. I took the major step toward that second goal

continued on next page



**Dark Spirit**  
48" x 37"  
© 2005

## Susan McCraw

from previous page

in 2000. I turned from hand quilting to machine quilting and from hand appliqué to a fabric collage technique. Now, I typically fuse fabric shapes onto pieced or fused backgrounds and finish the edges of the appliquéd shapes with satin stitch or open zig-zag stitching.

The inspiration for most of my quilts has come from carpets and other weavings made in traditional societies around the world. The pieces that appeal to me most are not the classic Oriental rugs from mansions and museums, but items used daily by ordinary people. In the desert regions of Turkey and Central Asia, a rug may serve as a floor covering, an interior partition, or a tent dwelling's outside door. A stack of rugs may form a bed, a table, or a seat. Members of carpet-making nomadic tribes pack their belongings in rug-like saddlebags, carried on the backs of camels and donkeys. In India, Africa, and Indonesia, a large rectangle of cotton, silk, or bark cloth may be a skirt, a table cover, a baby carrier, or a man's principal garment. The makers of these textiles, many of whom are women, decorate their work with an immense variety of shapes and symbols that are as old as civilization itself.

My vision of a new quilt sometimes arises from a woven or embroidered motif; sometimes from a combination of colors and patterns; and other times from the way that the forms on a tribal fabric are organized. Often I mix elements from three or four sources.

Interestingly, the skills of analysis and categorization that I brought from my days of practicing law have greatly benefited my art. This past experience has helped me to organize my large archive of sketches, photos, and doodles into a list of major design elements: zigzags, grids, lines, mandalas, calligraphy, and so forth. These are my raw materials for beginning a new composition.

When I began as an art quilter, I



*Ribbons on the Wind*, 18" x 15", ©2005

made only one or two large pieces per year. Over time I began working smaller to bring more of my design ideas to completion. I had no thought of making money from my artwork. I consciously reminded myself that I was not pursuing art as a career. I was working hard, but my schedule was shaped only by my creative drive. I showed my work at the annual exhibits of Quilters' Connection and in juried New England exhibitions such as *A Quilters' Gathering* and *Images*.

2004 was a real watershed year for me. First, I was invited to participate in a two-person gallery exhibition with a painter friend. Then my quilt *Regalia* was selected for *ArtQuilts at the Sedgwick* in Pennsylvania. And, my critique group scheduled four exhibitions to occur within the year.

I needed 15 to 20 pieces for the two-person show, and I had only half a dozen on hand. I planned and executed nine by April, and during those months, I probably learned more about making art quilts than I had in the previous decade.

By the end of 2004, I had sold six quilts and had contributed an illustrated article about my work to the New England Rug Society's monthly publication. I had sold an image of another quilt to a U.S. senator to use on the cover of his family's Christmas card. At this point, I was emboldened to present myself as an artist, as well as a quilter.

Through jury processes, I became a member of the Cambridge (Massachusetts) Art Association and a professional artist member of SAQA. I put together a presentation with images and actual quilts called *Ethnic Textiles as Design Inspirations*. I was pleased to present it as a SAQA Lecture at the Houston International Quilt Festival in 2007, as well as to guilds.

My artwork was exhibited in art galleries at Brandeis University, private preparatory schools, public libraries, and commercial locations. Several of my quilts were juried into SAQA's *The Creative Force 2006*, the regional exhibition *Unbound*, and into exhibitions sponsored by the Cambridge Art Association. With a



**Bermuda Daze**

24" x 30"

©2007

fellow member of New Wrinkle and Cambridge Art, I curated and participated in an all-textile exhibition at the Association's premier gallery in Harvard Square.

My recent artwork reflects a shift in my approach to design. I'm moving away from ethnic models and toward the fundamental components of pattern: zigzags, grids, stripes, and circles. Most of my recent quilts now present concentrated and simplified variations on these elements. I've begun to work with additional techniques: machine embroidery, layering, and designing with cut paper. I am also experimenting with new materials: paints, wax pastels, and sheer fabrics. Although I've made only a handful of representational quilts, in my future artwork I would like to make better use of the photographs that I take of natural and manmade forms.

I'm not a marketing role model. Many of the quilts I've made have never been for sale. I've kept them to decorate our home or present them as gifts. After practicing law for so

long on the clock, I have an aversion to placing aspects of my art life on a deadline. I take delight in the process of planning and execution. Even when I'm very pleased with a product, it's a satisfaction secondary to the ongoing joy of bringing a projected design to fruition. Of course, I treasure the thrill of knowing that someone likes my work well enough to pay me for it, but I haven't pursued commissions or commercial representation.

This year, I'm sending out to guilds a brochure about my ethnic inspirations program and my color workshop. After start-up costs for equipment and supplies, my current annual investment in my art is about \$3,000. I have a roomy studio space in my home, and I try not to buy fabric unless it's for a particular quilt in progress.

Joining SAQA and becoming a PAM has generated strong impulses to become more active as a professional. The evolution of SAQA-U as a valuable resource has been perfectly timed for me. SAQA members have gener-

ously helped me to become familiar with resizing digital images, burning CDs, constructing PowerPoint presentations, participating in a Wiki, and critiquing my own work. Cambridge Art Association has given me opportunities to work not only with artists in other media, but also with jurors, journalists, and administrators in the art world.

From the vantage point of my sixties, I recognize that I have lived several different work lives. Recently, I have realized that I can enjoy challenge and gratification without having to climb all the steps of a career ladder. I find that I'm more comfortable with who I am and what I do as an artist than I was as an academic-in-training, a stay-at-home mom and volunteer, or a lawyer. In many ways, the present is proving to be the most satisfying part of my life. I look forward to every day, and to all the artwork to come. ▼

*SAQA professional artist member Susan McCraw is a quilt artist and workshop teacher living in Belmont, Massachusetts. Her web site is [www.susanmccraw.com](http://www.susanmccraw.com).*

# The meeting of art and quilt

by Julia E. Pfaff

I make art in a quilt medium, but I do not call what I make an art quilt. Looking from the outside in, especially from the vantage point of the art world, there seems to be an inherent paradox in the question: Is it art or is it a quilt?

In order to determine whether my peers were using the terms “art quilt” and “quilt artist,” I did an informal email survey of the participants of *Quilt National '07*, *Quilt Visions '06*, and *AQATS '06*. Of the respondents, only 46% used these terms. This usage ranged from “always” to “on occasion.” 54% of respondents did not use the terms at all, choosing for the most part to say they made fiber or textile art. Only 11% of respondents said they were artists, creating art with no qualifiers. Subsequent to this survey, there has also been a continued dialogue on this subject on the SAQA Yahoo!® group.

The results in both venues are telling, not so much in that I was not alone in my non-use of “art quilt,” but in that there are a multitude of approaches to what we call ourselves and what we make. It is abundantly clear that the words really do matter. They help define us and our artwork. They explain our intent and help us place ourselves in the broad spectrum of art activities.

First coined in the 1980s, the term “art quilt” held a valid position within the quilting community, indicating the function of the object. These quilts were meant to be on the wall, not on the bed. However, with time and expanded usage, resistance to the use of “art quilt” has sprung up.

It is a fact that the use of the term “art quilt” has been co-opted by the quilting industry as a marketing tool and a type of “project de jour.” This is often cited as one of the fundamental problems with its continued usage. How often have we seen quilting

magazines extolling the virtues of “Easy Art Quilts through the Magic of Something or Other?” While a number of respondents embraced the use of “art quilt” and proudly call themselves quilt artists, the depth of resistance to these terms was equally reflected in responses. Interestingly, there was as much concern with the adoption of the word “art” (too elitist), and the retention of the word “quilt” (too folksy), as there was with the combination of the two words.

As much as we may want to pay homage to our history, there is a general understanding that the use of the term “quilt” can bring with it unwanted associations of hobbies, craftiness, and kits. While some respondents were concerned about dropping the use of the term “quilt,” others indicated embarrassment in the association with the quilting tradition and were trying to set themselves apart from what had come before. They felt this also diminished the status for those who maintained use of the word “quilt.” Interestingly, the association with grandmothers was both reviled and cherished by different respondents.

Respondents often expressed the idea that if you use the word “art,” you are saying that what you do is better than a “quilt.” While the perception of elitism is hard to combat, most thought conversely that use of the term “art” emphasizes that the distinction is one of function and intent, not quality. If the maker wants something to function as art, that is his or her decision to make. The audience, however, decides whether or not it is good art.

Another common complaint regarding the use of the term “art” in relationship to quilting is that it is used as an excuse for poor workmanship. It is true that craftsmanship is not the measure of art, but craftsman-

ship in art does matter. Poor craftsmanship diminishes art as much as anything else. The reverse side to this complaint was noted over a decade ago when a friend of mine stated that the problem with the art quilt was that a lot of it was just bad art. Robert Shaw also refers to the “all-too-often insular world” of art quilts. Developing a system of critical thinking and awareness of the broader art world is an important goal for us all.

Rebecca Stevens, consulting curator for Contemporary Textiles at the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C., believes the term “art quilt” is well respected and understood in the fiber and art fields. A number of respondents, however, felt that no matter what we call our work, it is not taken seriously by the art world. The obstacles to acceptance of quilt making as an art medium are subtle and persistent.

A 2006 survey estimated the number of quilters in the U.S. to be 27 million, up from 15 million in 1994. This is approximately 1 in 12 people living in the U.S. Quilting is a hugely popular activity, and one that is firmly rooted in the vernacular. It is part of the American psyche like no other craft medium. Perversely, it is the only traditional craft medium that historically has not had academic affiliation.

Quilting as a popular folk craft contributes to the deficiency of critical attention and lack of acceptance that quilting receives within the fine art world. Its apparent accessibility to a broad audience makes it suspect as high art. Value is assigned within the contemporary art world based on concept and innovation. Traditional craft models more often rely on the culturally shared understanding of the technical skill and labor of the maker in order to assign value. These two value systems are at odds with

**Harmony**  
66" x 55"  
©1995 Julia E. Pfaff

each other. The more labor intensive and process-related the making of an object is, the lower it goes on a fine art hierarchy.

In looking at the place where art and quilt meet, there is a continuum of sorts: a blurry place in which quilters making quilts, and artists making art, encounter each other. Within this continuum, I see three different categories of the ways in which art and quilt meet. These categories are not meant to denote value or a hierarchy. They are derived from the objective of the maker. This intent is related to references used, guidelines followed, and decisions made while working. The maker's intent is not always apparent to the viewer.

#### **Quilts presented as art**

In this category, form completely follows function. These are quilts meant to function as bed coverings but which have been moved out of the domestic sphere and into a museum or gallery setting.

This moving of cultural artifacts into a museum setting is not particularly new. Western society has been doing it since the Renaissance. This recontextualization was the premise of the 1971 *Abstract Design in American Quilts* at the Whitney Museum and a multitude of quilt shows since that time. Its most recent manifestation was seen in the 12-city museum tour of *The Quilts of Gee's Bend*. This shift from one arena to another relies on the appreciation of the audience, collector, curator, or sometimes even maker. Within this rubric, all quilts could potentially be considered art, as argued by Michael James and Hilary Fletcher.

Making a quilted bed covering, and then exhibiting it in an art gallery context, was my earliest connection between art and quilts. During the late 1970s, I was studying art history

and printmaking at the University of Toronto. I knew that people liked to hang quilts in their homes as decoration, but I wanted to use them as installation pieces within the sterile, white-cube setting of the art gallery. This idea occurred to me after studying the artwork of Joseph Kosuth, who had done a series of conceptual works focusing on a chair. If a kitchen chair could be the basis for conceptual art, why not a quintessentially domestic object, the quilt?

As a feminist, I was drawn to the subversive aspect of putting a lovingly hand-stitched bed covering into the male-dominated, hard-edged, contemporary art setting. A bonus was that I did not have to buy or find quilts; I could make them myself. At the time, I had no success convincing a commercial gallery in my native Toronto to support this idea.

*Harmony* was the last quilt I made

to be presented as art. It is part of a series which includes Bedouin-inspired cross-stitch embellishment. It is based on quilt form and function, relying for its inception on quilt history and canons.

#### **Quilts made as art**

In this category, form still follows function, but the intent of the maker has changed. The work functions as a quilt, but the maker is looking to address issues and concerns that stand outside quilt history and canons.

*But Did She Drown?* is one of my earliest conscious attempts to make a quilt that would be considered art. I used the idea of a funerary quilt as my model and put a visual voice to a tragic event in my life. The included text is a journal excerpt, written after a close friend was killed in the

continued on next page



## Meeting from previous page

crash of KAL Flight 007 in 1983. For years, the question of whether she lived long enough to have drowned plagued my dreams and often intruded into my waking hours. As an artist, it didn't matter to me if the viewer knew the origins of my satin-stitched question, or whether they thought the quilt was humorous or morbid. Using full-coverage satin-stitch embroidery was an effective, historically accurate, and beautiful way of drawing in a quilt. My approach to combining art and quilt changed soon after the making of this quilt.

### Art made in a quilt medium

In this work, form breaks away from any reference to function and is directed completely by artistic objectives. The work is a quilt by nature of its structure or materials only. This distinction speaks to the mindset, background, and point of reference of the maker, not to the quality of the work produced. As both a viewer and a maker, I do not have the same criteria for a bed quilt that I would have for a piece of art. My expectations are different, and my reasons for valuing it are different. As in any artistic medium, there can be successful, original, and significant work as well as mediocre, derivative, and insignificant pieces produced.

By 1990, I had had exhibition and sales success with my quilts, and I had been spending 2-6 months a year working in Greece, Egypt, and Jordan as a technical artist for archaeologists. I also had a nagging discomfort that I was artistically limited by using a quilt form. I felt the need to combine what had become divergent, insular aspects of my life: quilting, printmaking, and archaeology. I needed to learn how to dye fabric, and I wanted a critical environment in which to reshape how I thought about using quilting as an art medium. To facilitate this, I went to graduate school.

In my mind prior to this time, making a quilt and making a piece of art were different types of activities. One was fun, followed a set of



**But Did She Drown?** 81" x 64", © 1987

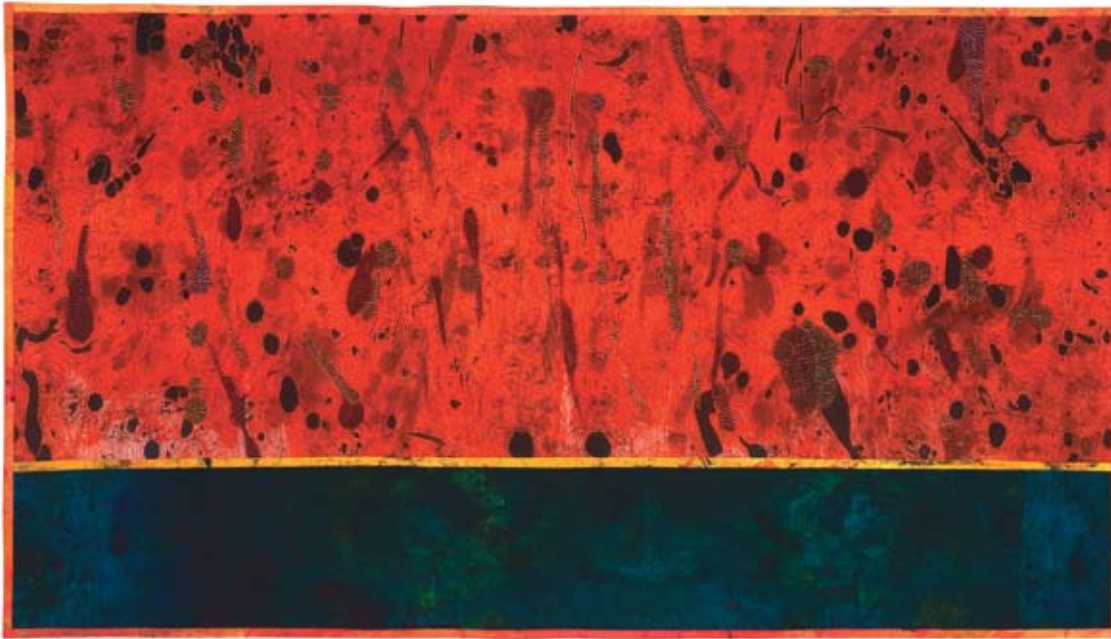
rules, turned out exactly as I planned, and was done to relax. The other reached down into my gut, changed and evolved as it was worked on, and often caused me great anxiety in its making. The challenge, for me, was that I had practiced these two activities separately, but simultaneously, over a long period of time.

Since graduate school, my work has continued to evolve and change. My studio practice requires isolation, and I am more likely to get inspiration from a painting or a broken piece of pavement than a quilt. *My Week in Key Largo* artwork is the most recent in a series that combines pure abstraction with running-stitch embroidery. It is based on the West Bengal tradition of *Kantha*. My work will never be confused with a bed covering, but I have maintained a traditional approach to the medium. I like a turned-under appliqué edge, my backs are well rendered and neat, and

my stitches regular and small. This is characteristic of my work in any medium. I have virtuoso technique as a printmaker, and if I were a painter, I'd be working on perfectly gessoed canvases in layers of oil glazes.

In looking at *Harmony* and *My Week in Key Largo*, I see that I have ended up at a place not so different from where I started with my use of Palestinian cross stitch. Regardless of any shift in approach, my work's relationship with the contemporary art world is still problematic. Forget quilt or even craft issues, the mere fact that I am making 2D work for the wall makes me old school.

I don't use digital manipulation, sound, viewer interaction, recycled materials, found objects, lighting effects, or disturbing social commentary. I continue to support the idea that art matters, and it is not a self-indulgent endeavor, but one that civilized society needs and ultimately



**My Week in Key Largo**  
24" x 43"  
© 2008

values. As a mature artist, it has been a conscious decision on my part to make art in a quilt medium. My feminist ideals may have matured, but I have maintained a commitment to make significant art in a medium that is true to my self, my gender, and my history. Whether we are looking at quilts presented as art, quilts made as art, or art made in a quilt medium, the essential question remains: is it good art? ▼

SAQA professional artist member Julia E. Pfaff made her first quilt at the age of ten and has an undergraduate degree in art history and a masters of fine art degree

in textiles. Today, she is a studio artist and adjunct faculty in the School of the Arts at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia. She teaches in the Department of Fashion Design and Merchandising, as well as in the Department of Crafts/Material Studies.

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*Editor's note: Opinion pieces are the opinions of the individual authors and are not necessarily the opinions of the SAQA board members, president, or executive director. The SAQA Journal editor encourages SAQA members to express their ideas through the Opinion forum.*

#### Two questions were sent by email:

1. Do you use the term "art quilt" or "quilt artist" when referring to your work and/or yourself?
2. If not, what term or description do you use to describe your work and yourself?

#### Survey Findings

147 emails were sent out to individual artists. A number of the artists were represented in two or three of the selected shows. 140 individuals received my questions; 7 were bouncebacks or email errors. 110 participants responded, giving me a very good response rate of 78.6%.

#### A total of 46% use the terms "art quilt" and "quilt artist"

- 17% said they use both terms. They make art quilts and are quilt artists
- 1 person said she is a quilter who makes art quilts
- 17% call themselves an artist or a fiber artist and they make art quilts

11% said the terminology they use depends on both the audience and occasion, sometimes using "art quilt" and "quilt artist" and sometimes using "work," "art," "fiber art," "artist," or "fiber artist."

#### A total of 54% do not use the terms "art quilt" or "quilt artist" when talking about themselves or their work.

- 31% said they make fiber or textile art. They call themselves either artists (13%) or fiber/textile artists (18%)
- 11% call themselves artists (with no prefix) who make art (again, no prefix)
- 5.5% call themselves artists who make quilts
- 4.5% identify themselves as quilters who make quilts. These felt the use of "artist" or "art" was either problematic or presumptuous or something for the audience to assign
- 1 person calls herself a craftsperson
- 1 person calls herself a designer who makes quilts.

## Have you considered creating three-dimensional quilts?

by Carolyn Lee Vehslage

As the SAQA Journal editor, one of my jobs is to come up with the contents of each issue and decide what type of artwork will be published in the Member Gallery pages. I was so inspired by the 3D artwork featured in this issue, I asked some of the artists who responded how they started creating quilted sculptural objects. This led to asking how they give them structure, how they display them, how they ship them, where they exhibit them, and if they've been successful in selling them.

Jill Rumoshosky Werner ([www.wernerstudio.com](http://www.wernerstudio.com)) made her first three-dimensional quilted artwork, *Discombobulated*, in 2001. On a whim, she made a long, skinny quilt that was 2 inches wide by 10 yards long. Initially, she used it when she gave "artist in the classroom" presentations to young children in the local public schools. She would ask them, "Who wants to be wrapped up in a quilt?" Then she would tie the kids up using the quilt like a rope, and they would always end up laughing wildly.

Several times, she tried to create a two-dimensional wall piece out of it, but it never seemed successful. One day, when she left it piled on a table, another artist commented that she liked the way it looked. Jill photographed it as it was, in a heap, and entered it into a show where it was accepted. It went on to be shown in a number of exhibitions and is now part of the Thomas Contemporary Quilt Collection.

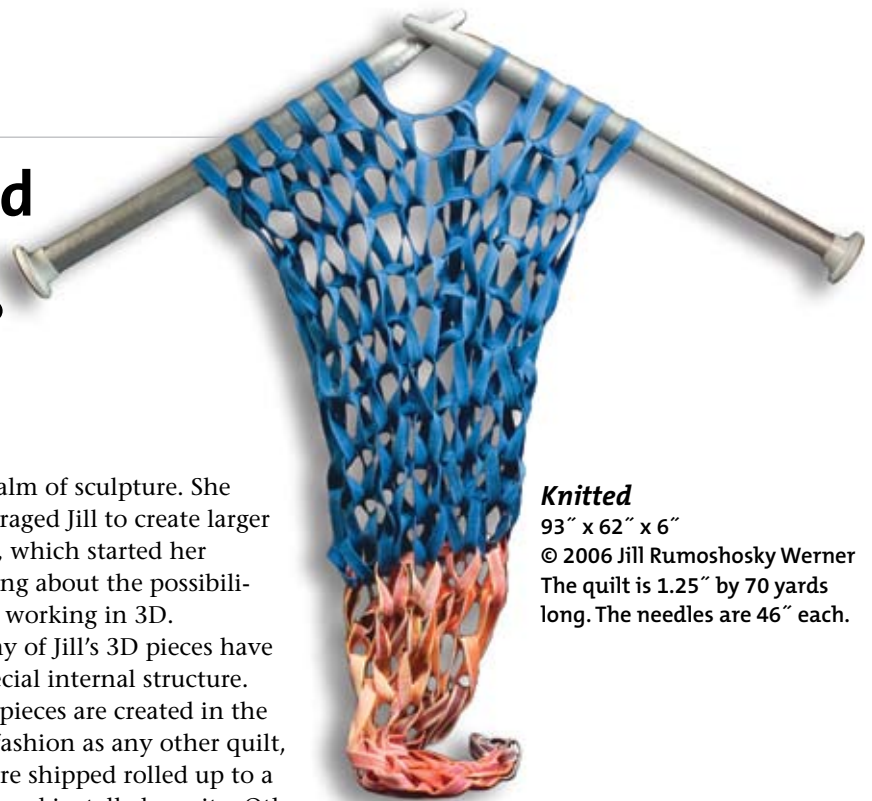
When *Discombobulated* was exhibited in the first *Art Quilts at the Whistler* in Lowell, Massachusetts, the artist who gave the gallery talk commented on the significance of this piece because it took quilting into

the realm of sculpture. She encouraged Jill to create larger works, which started her thinking about the possibilities of working in 3D.

Many of Jill's 3D pieces have no special internal structure. These pieces are created in the same fashion as any other quilt, then are shipped rolled up to a venue and installed on site. Other pieces have various stiffening agents inside, including Peltex®, buckram, fusible fleece, wire mesh, wood, or metal. Sometimes a hanging stick is involved displaying her 3D artwork, and sometimes there are wood or metal parts that support it.

Jill finds that her art defies easy classification. She has entered it in exhibitions for quilts, fiber art, fine craft, sculpture, and mixed media. She does not enter "pipe and drape" quilt shows because there is no way to display dimensional artwork there.

Despite the recognition Jill has



### Knitted

93" x 62" x 6"

© 2006 Jill Rumoshosky Werner

The quilt is 1.25" by 70 yards long. The needles are 46" each.

received for her 3D artwork, she finds it isn't the type of art people buy to hang above their living room sofa, so she hasn't sold any significant pieces. This lack of sales has been difficult for her to mentally reconcile with her business and marketing background. However, she feels that creating a significant body of work is essential to her artistic growth and journey, so she plans to continue on the same path.

Barbara Barrick McKie ([mckieart.com](http://mckieart.com)) started creating 3D artwork in early 2002. She became interested



### Surface Design #3

25" diameter, 4" deep

©2002 Barbara Barrick McKie





### ***Chasing a Dream***

28" x 24" x 14"

© 2008 Susan Else

in origami and took a class from a Connecticut artist who taught her some paper folding techniques. Barb thought she could achieve some interesting designs if she applied the techniques to fabric.

Barb stuffs her pieces with batting and quilts them while flat. Then she soaks the pieces in Stiffy® and shapes them. Most of her 3D artwork is mounted on a quilted circular background that she attaches to a circular ½" foam board for added stiffness. She finds that this solution works well, and if an edge gets bent a bit, she can use a steam iron to press it back in place. For hanging, she glues a saw-toothed metal hanger to the back of the foam board.

To ship or store her 3D artwork, which is usually about 25" in diameter, Barb stuffs tissue paper under the center of the pieces and along the raised edges. She also wraps them in tissue, paying careful attention to the tops, and places them in a large, square box that is about 6-8" high.

**Susan Else** (<http://susanelse.com>) started creating quilted 3D artwork in 1998, after she saw her friend Michael McNamara make some cloth figures. At the same time, she had added a raised inner border to a small, flat art

quilt. The two ideas came together on her design wall, and she placed her figures on a stage-like structure. Her artwork stayed fairly flat and wall-oriented (shallow, wall-mounted dioramas) for a while, but it has morphed over the past ten years into free-standing objects.

Primarily, she does figurative work: both individual figures and more complex scenes. Two recent major pieces are motorized: a quilt-covered Ferris wheel, complete with riders and soundtrack, and a life-size, quilt-covered skeleton that is very festive in an eerie way. Although her small-scale figures, less than ten inches high, do not incorporate a quilted surface, she always uses quilting somewhere in the settings for them. Her large-scale figures, 18" and larger, have quilted surfaces composed of many different fabrics.

Susan has also created a long-running series of rock pieces, from full-sized rock walls to small groups of river pebbles. She is on a personal mission to show that this medium can be used to create anything that exists in our universe.

She uses various armature materials inside the cloth surface of her artwork, including fiberfill, polystyrene

foam, plastic board, and aluminum armature wire. The Ferris wheel has a welded steel armature created by a friend of hers.

Shipping is a challenge because her artwork is large and unusually shaped. However, it's fairly light, since most of the innards are made of plastic. She often adapts a new cardboard carton (such as a wardrobe box, available at self-storage facilities), and protects the piece with bubble wrap.

Susan enters her artwork in national juried quilt shows, sends her artwork to gallery exhibitions, and sells her artwork through her local open studios tour. Her pieces have a humorous edge, and it takes a particular kind of gallery to market them. The San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles has her small 3D artwork in their gift shop. She has sold at least half of the artwork she has made over the past ten years.

**Regina Benson** ([www.reginabenson.com](http://www.reginabenson.com)) made her first original two-dimensional quilt in 1969. Her first sculptural fiber piece in 1974 was a natural-dyed doll set called *The Conversation*. The 18-20 inch dolls stood together, and she found it a challenge to figure out how to make them stable without filling the bottoms of them with metal or other heavy material. That experience made her realize she needed some formal training about sculpture, gravity, and many other aspects of materials engineering.

Regina took a course in architectural materials offered by the Industrial Arts Department of her local community college. It taught her which materials were appropriate to interpret aspects of skyscraper, bridge, and highway overpass construction, and it also taught her which metals could support her pieces without showing a visible, heavy structure.

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**Unearthed**, 44" x 44" x 8", © 2008 Regina Benson

She learned how to curve and undulate her artwork, and how to keep it from sagging. The bulk of her 3D artwork has been made since 2006.

She uses her own surface-designed cloth to create art quilts that float off the ceiling or off the wall. She likes the spatial aspect of her artwork and the shadow play that happens as someone views the artwork. Frequently, the viewer must step into, around, and across her artwork to fully experience the piece. In *Hard Rain*, the viewer can actually be surrounded by the artwork. In *On Edge*, the piece is composed of 9 double-sided quilted panels all hung at 30 degrees. As you pass the piece from left to right, the entire view changes. For *Core Sample*, a triptych, the layered surface includes various sheer fabrics that change from yellow to rust as the viewer walks by it.

Regina has learned how to devise simple ways to invisibly hang her 3D artwork. All of her wall pieces are hung from a 1- or 2-point support, such as a nail, against a firm surface. Most of her ceiling-hung artwork has a 3-point support (attachments at three places that connect invisible line or thin steel wire from the ceiling to the piece.) All of her recent pieces have an upper sleeve in which she

threads a thin aluminum or steel rod, slat, or wire. To maintain a specific vertical shape, she normally echoes the shaping by threading an extremely light metal rod, slat, or wire in a bottom sleeve that usually hangs free from the wall.

Her dimensional artwork is shipped much like her flat art quilts. The textile parts are normally wrapped around a cardboard or plastic (swim noodle) tube, along with the separately wrapped metal rods, slats, or wires. Both parts are placed in a box. The only

hanging problem seems to be that her wall-hung artwork requires a hard-surface wall. Large quilt conference venues such as The International Quilt Festival at Houston, Mancuso Shows, or Festival of Quilts have to provide something other than their normal aluminum rod-curtained walls, or her artwork can't

be displayed.

While Regina enters mostly fine art and sculpture exhibitions, *Surround Sound* received the **Quilt National '07** Award of Excellence and was purchased by a collector from St. Louis, Missouri. Her artwork *Downpour* was juried into **Quilt Visions '08**, and one of her newest dimensional pieces was juried into **Quilt National '09**. She has a special solo show of her artwork, entitled *On the Curve*, scheduled for May 1–July 11, 2009, at the Byron C. Cohen Gallery of Contemporary Art in Kansas City, Missouri.

She has sold several dimensional pieces to municipalities through their public arts programs. *Hard Rain* was purchased by the city of Aurora, Colorado, and *Eroded Message* was purchased by the city of Lakewood, Colorado. She completed three large private commissions within the last year—one for a couple in Germany, one for an architect in San Diego, and one for a pediatrician in Chicago.

**Kris Gregson Moss** ([www.krisgregsonmoss.com](http://www.krisgregsonmoss.com)) started making 3D artwork in 1995 when she took a sculpture class at her local community college. The instructor was amazed at her desire to make a sculpture out of textiles. Kris imagined pieces of fabric falling from Heaven rather like the autumn leaves in the Adirondacks. For her 7-foot high, 8-foot diameter artwork *Quilters' Progress*, she fashioned three ladies from copper tubing. They stand in a circle with their right hands together, holding a needle from which flows a 96" hexagonal snowflake quilt that ends up resting on the floor at their feet.

Her structures are sometimes supported by wooden frames that her engineer husband builds. She has used foam core in smaller sculptures but is moving away from it, as it has a tendency to bend out of shape. She uses layers of very hefty interfacing



**Melody**

21" x 8" x 11"

© 2007 Kris Gregson Moss



and Timtex® in some of her artwork. Some of her mobiles are suspended on embroidery hoops. Wire and tree branches are effectively utilized also.

Shipping is a problem for Kris. Rather than shipping her larger pieces, she has driven them to venues and installed them herself. She built a “cradle” of styrofoam for her piece *Melody*, for the Tactile Architecture 2007 exhibition, but it was shipped back without the cradle. Her larger pieces, *Sea Star* and *Nova*, have their own pedestals that must be delivered to the site.

Many juried quilt shows do not accept 3D artwork. Most of Kris’ sculptures have been shown by the SAQA regional group Fiber Revolution ([www.fiberrevolution.com](http://www.fiberrevolution.com)). Her experience is the opposite of Jill Werner’s; she has sold only her 3D artwork, and not her 2D quilts.

**Judy Cuddihee** ([www.judycuddihee.com](http://www.judycuddihee.com)) finds 3D artwork to be an easy blend of her art and needle skills. She started creating fiber sculptures in 2005 during a metal sculpture class. It seemed natural to her to cover her metal sculpture with yarn and attach layers of fabric and canvas to it. She describes her pieces as “huggable,” meaning they are soft and approachable.

She uses stuffing, wood, metal, and found objects to give her “creatures” structure. Instead of shipping the heavier pieces, she drives them to venues. Her lighter pieces can be shipped without difficulty. They are usually displayed on gallery pedestals

or directly on the floor if they are larger works.

Judy enters them into mixed media and doll art exhibitions. She has yet to sell a 3D piece through galleries but has made some direct sales. Participating in open studios has enabled her to sell her quilted sculpture as well.

**Mary Beth Bellah** ([www.marybethbellah.com](http://www.marybethbellah.com)) started creating quilted teapots in 1996 when her mother inherited the family tea cup collection. Mary Beth wanted to make her mother a birthday gift that celebrated this collection. The quilted teapot series evolved as she played around with quirky tea-related phrases. She has completed over 30 teapots so far.

As she developed expertise in handling materials “in-the-round,” her ideas continued to stretch and expand. A group exhibition in 1991 titled *From a Woman’s Hand* inspired her series of 3D quilted hands that are both free-standing sculpture and integrated components of dimensional wall artwork.

She also has a series of large scale grids and structural portrait pieces. She frequently uses recycled materials. The larger artworks are important to Mary Beth, because they tell different stories depending on the perspective of the viewer. She tries to let people know that if they just see her artwork from one spot, they’ve missed a good bit of the conversation.

Different wire meshes are covered with batting and fabric to create her intricately curved sculptures.

*Top, left: Two Friends in an Armchair*  
9” x 9” x 11, © 2007 Judy Cuddihee

*Top, right: Tea Party*  
12” x 13” x 8”, ©2001 Mary Beth Bellah

She usually has to build a shipping box for each piece. Most of her 3D artwork is pedestal displayed or wall mounted with traditional methods of wire/monofilament supports. Complications arise when she needs to convey to the people who are installing an exhibition how to assemble the artwork or set up the supports. She takes close-up pictures of her process and then sends those photos in a step-by-step instruction sheet.

Bruce Hoffman invited Mary Beth to exhibit her teapots at the Works Gallery in Philadelphia, and he has also taken them to SOFA (Sculpture Objects and Functional Art exhibition) in Chicago. There are several other galleries that have sold her 3D artwork as well.

After reading about how these SAQA members have expanded in new directions, maybe it’s time for you to take your artwork into another dimension. Think of the possibilities! ▼

*SAQA Journal Editor Carolyn Lee Vehslage is a fiber artist and director of the SAQA regional group Fiber Revolution ([www.fiberrevolution.com](http://www.fiberrevolution.com)). She lives in Sicklerville, New Jersey. Her web site is [www.clvquilts.com](http://www.clvquilts.com).*

## Sarah Ann Smith

### *Naiads*

45" x 18" x 2", © 2007  
www.sarahannsmith.com

Made for the *It's Good to Be Green* invitational exhibit curated by Larkin Van Horn. I believe the naiads — the guardian spirits of the waters — are the true "green" spirits. Willows always grow by water, and I wanted to create a piece where a passing breeze would sway the branches, just like a willow growing near a stream.



## Jane Kenyon

### *Shroud for the Northern Abalone*

17" x 20" (open, shown left); 6" x 6" x 20" (closed, shown right);  
© 2006 | www.janekenyon.com

This *Shroud* is part of a series of 12 *Shrouds* for red-listed endangered species in British Columbia, Canada. Unlike the usual art exhibition, the public was invited to handle the artwork, for a more intimate experience with the pieces and with the endangered species represented.

## Diane Savona

### *Domestic Archaeology Series: Chest*

11" x 17" x 3" closed; 11" x 26" x 3" open, ©2007

My work uses salvaged textiles to honor the traditional skills of earlier generations. I print crochet images and instructions on found cloth. Remnants of needlework are handsewn onto their printed images along with ceramic impressions of needlework. This is presented in the framework of domestic usage: stretched on folding triptychs constructed from old wooden drying racks or sewn into modified sewing boxes.





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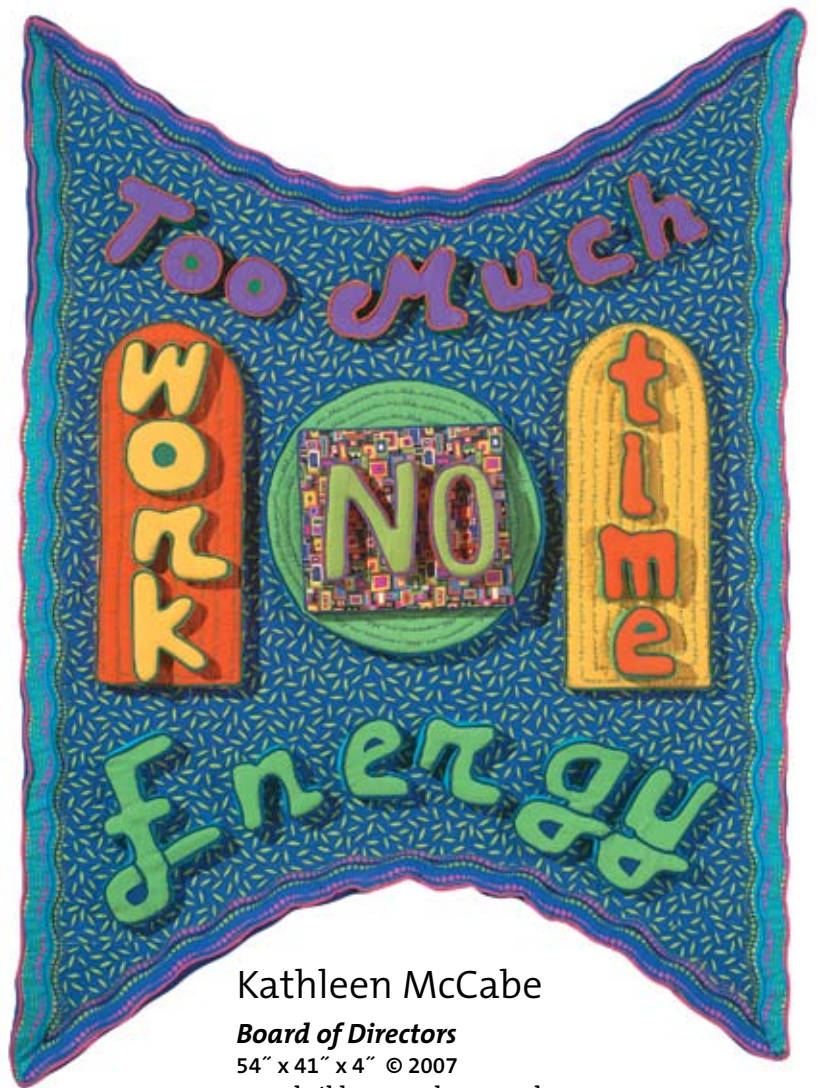


### Dinah Sargeant

#### *Red-Handed*

18" x 11" x 4", ©2002  
[www.dinahsargeant.com](http://www.dinahsargeant.com)

Catching self with a memory.



### Kathleen McCabe

#### *Board of Directors*

54" x 41" x 4" © 2007  
[www.kathleenmccabecoronado.com](http://www.kathleenmccabecoronado.com)

Working with a board of directors can be a frustrating experience.

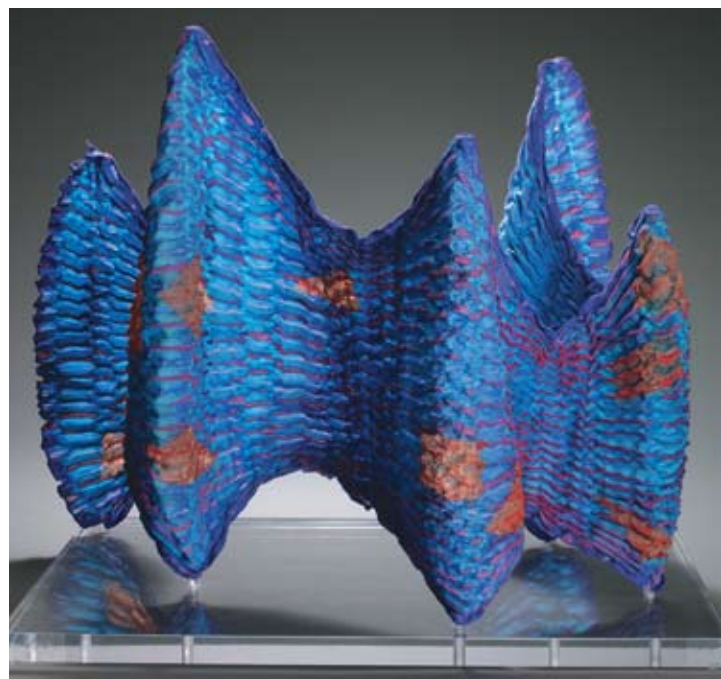


### Holly Brackmann

#### *Folded Currents*

20" x 23" x 16" © 2008  
[www.hollybrackmann.com](http://www.hollybrackmann.com)

This piece is part of a series starting with flat fabric which has been permanently pleated and manipulated into a sculptural form.



# Considering sponsorship

by Tove Pirajā Hansen

**M**eeting the love of your life is a gift. I knew that when I met accountant Michael Larsen last year. He changed my life both romantically and economically. He is very enthusiastic about my art quilts. He tries to understand how I can make sense out of the chaos in my atelier and bring it together into fine pieces of art.

He suggested the idea of getting a sponsor for my art quilts. My first reaction was that it would be impossible. But after a few weeks of thinking about sponsorship, it sounded more and more plausible.

When one of my art quilts was chosen for SAQA Europe's *Wide Horizons*, I said to Michael, "We're traveling to France in two months." Although money was tight for both of us, I felt it was important to set the goal, have faith, and keep an open mind. The idea of sponsorship sounded better and better.

Fate must have heard me. A week later, I had a visit with Anne-Lis Gjødsbøl. When we had met a couple of years ago, we discovered that we had something in common: a passion for what we do. She is passionate about her part-time business selling aloe vera products, and I'm really into art quilts. It was our enthusiasm for our work that made us click. In some ways, aloe vera and art quilts are alike: not many people know about them (at least in Denmark), and it takes time for people to understand and enjoy them.

During our visit, I told her about *Wide Horizons* and my hopes of finding a sponsor. She was thrilled with my news and believed that I absolutely had to go to France. She was willing to sponsor my trip right then and there. She asked how it would work, and thus began my research.

I found out that sponsorship is about targeting a market, having an

image, and promoting the work. A friend helped me discern who my own target market is. Michael found several examples of sponsorship contracts on the Internet, and we created one specifically for my needs.

I worked on making a professional sponsoring proposal that would be attractive to my sponsor. Anne-Lis was impressed to see that there was a clear advantage for her to sponsor me. She would provide funds for me to create and promote my art, while I advertised her aloe business through my own PR. She sent me the money at once, and we began packing for France.

Through this experience, Michael and I discovered how well we're matched. He gave me a good idea, and I ran with it. As a consequence, we had a wonderful trip to Alsace, where we enjoyed ourselves, met new people, and received fresh inspiration for our lives.

## Thoughts and considerations

When I first heard Michael's idea about getting a sponsor, I had many questions. Here are some of them. Throughout art history many *maecenas* (rich patrons of the arts) helped artists financially so they could work. Where are these patrons today? Could sponsors be a possible modern interpretation of what *maecenas* were for artists back in history? Would sponsors interfere in the creative process as they used to? Can art and money be united?

Art is born of a free mind. I am the one in charge and I set the rules. I don't have to change what I do or how I see my art just to please the sponsor. The market is big enough to attract somebody who likes my artwork. There is more freedom today, very different from centuries ago when the world was as big as the village you lived in. A partnership today

can start with mutual interest. There is no need to sell your soul—you can always say "no."

Refuting our own stereotypes of what an artist's life is like is still a hurdle for some. Who says an artist should be doomed to poverty and misery? It's work like any other. Why shouldn't artists get paid and/or be sponsored? We have an active role in society. It's art and artists who inspire, provoke, and ask questions of the society we live in. We contribute to the development of our culture. We have the ability to urge people to think about our values and rethink our civilization, and we deserve to be acknowledged and supported for it. That's why I believe I am a good candidate for a sponsorship: because I can contribute something unique. And quite honestly, if companies are willing to pay a fortune to have their names on sweaty T-shirts worn by violent soccer players, they may enjoy sponsoring me for a change.

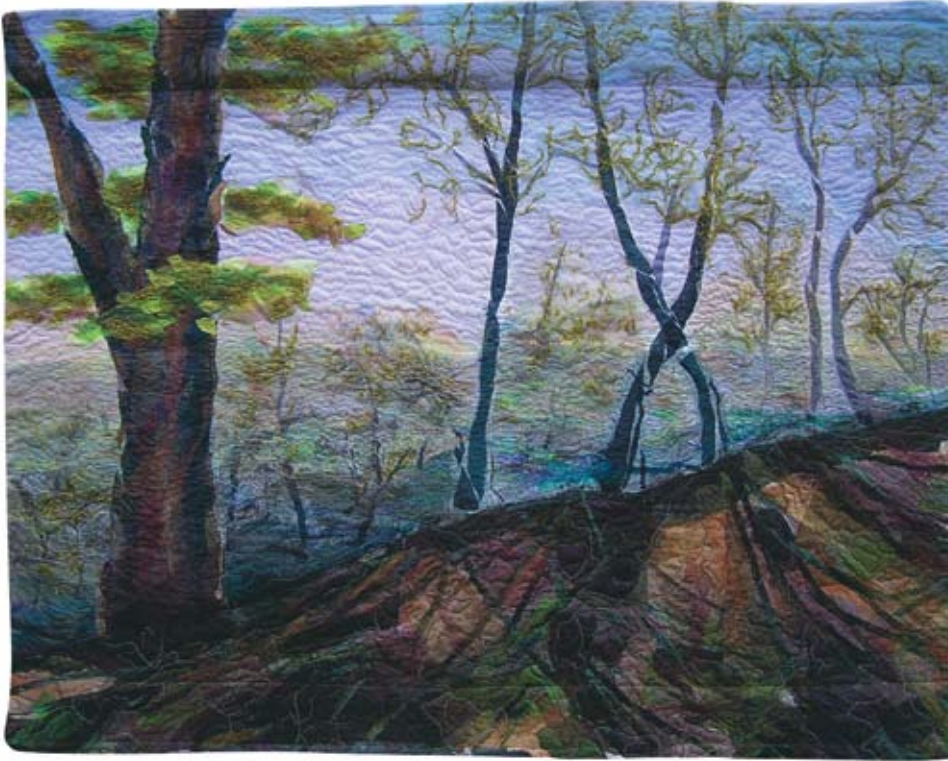
## Sponsorship: step by step

1. Make sure you know what your image is.
2. Find out who your target market is.
3. Find out who could be a possible sponsor.
4. Define what services you can offer your sponsor.
5. Define what kind of sponsorship you want. How much do you need?
6. Write a contract.

## Your image

The first thing you have to do in order to get a sponsorship is to clarify your image. Think of what you do and how you do it. These questions may help:

- Who connects to your art? What kind of people does it attract?



***New Beginnings: Hope,  
Light, Life and Will***

90 x 111 cm

©2008 Tove Pirajā Hansen

Think of people who come to your open studio days and exhibitions. What do they have in common?

- Which values are important to you and your art? Does it have a message?
- How would you describe your art if you were not a quilter? Try to see it from different perspectives.
- Can some of the procedures in your artwork relate to other procedures and values in the business world or society?

When you have these answers, you know what image you're "selling" to your sponsor. You'll also be able to focus your search on a select group of companies that might connect with your artwork. Here is a story to illustrate this. The Danish national soccer team is sponsored by Albert Knudsen, a company that develops and manufactures light switches. After years of sponsorship on national TV, the company in Denmark is well known because soccer is so popular. This sponsorship has been successful because it fulfills two needs: it supports a popular and nationally known sports team, and it provides advertising to the company.

Art quilts may not be soccer, but

they do attract a certain type of art lover. These people can be a possible target market for another business. This is valuable information for a sponsor. Sponsorship is not mercy or compassion. Sponsoring is a way of promoting your sponsor's business. You're connecting your image to your sponsor's image. An artist who works with environmentally friendly procedures and materials would be a good candidate for sponsorship by a company who's searching to improve its "green" image. On the other hand, it wouldn't make sense to seek a sponsorship from a cigarette company if you're planning an exhibition for a cancer center.

#### **What your sponsor gets in return**

For my sponsors, I offer free advertising on my web site, at exhibitions where I can get permission to advertise, during my open studio days, in my newsletter, and even on my everyday jacket where I embroidered my web site's address and my sponsor's name and address.

Besides improving the company's image, there might be other advantages. Here in Denmark, for example, it is possible to deduct a sponsorship from taxes. Ask your accountant what rules may apply in your country. I

also offer a 20% discount for artwork commissioned in the current year of our sponsorship contract. Shortly after the contract was signed, my sponsor asked me to help her design her business cards. She is also considering an art quilt portrait of her favorite plant, the aloe vera.

#### **Sponsorship types**

There are two benefits that motivate sponsors. One is access to your target market and the potential for profit, and the other is a desire to support art for art's sake. This company may want the title of "art supporter" to be part of its image. Sewing machine companies, an example of the first type of sponsor, might be very interested in your target market because some of the people admiring your art quilts would actually buy a machine. A big shipping company, on the other hand, may sponsor you out of a more altruistic motive, which might still can help their image, if not their sales directly.

I hope my experience can inspire you and help you get a sponsor. Best of luck! ▼

*SAQA professional artist member Tove Pirajā Hansen is an art quilter living in Bredsten, Denmark. Her web site is [www.tovepirajahansen.com](http://www.tovepirajahansen.com).*

## Expanding your artistic production

by Bonnie J. Smith

**M**y fiber art experience began after I was injured on my job, and I was told that I had to sit all the time so my feet could heal. I couldn't fathom reading any more books than the pile I had already read, so I decided to sign up for a beginning quilting class. I couldn't understand why the teacher wouldn't allow self expression. When she questioned my color choice, I stuck to my decision and created a quilt using my own ideas.

When we purchased a new house, I said, "I'll make art for our new home." To get ideas for my artwork, I have developed a great design trick. I take a blank 3x5 file card, and cut a one-inch square in the center of it. I move the opening around magazine images, illustrated books, and photographs until I find an interesting composition.

My first design from this method became a quilt called *Togetherness*. I found the inspiration in the book

*Earth From Above* by Yann Arthus-Bertrand. The moment I saw the image thru the one-inch square, it owned me. *Togetherness* was juried into the 2006 *California Art Quilts by SAQA Members* exhibition at the California Heritage Museum in Santa Monica. It was the first piece of artwork sold from the exhibition. *Togetherness* was also juried into the Santa Cruz Art League's annual fiber exhibition, where it received the Recipient Award, their highest honor.

While I was making *Togetherness*, I kept saying to myself, "I think this would make an interesting design if I just keep expanding the color palette." I was off and running, and I made a couple of four-plex artworks based on this design. Then I created the granddaddy of them all, *Images*. This piece was juried into the 2008 *Quilt Nihon* exhibition in Tokyo, Japan, where it received an Honorable Mention. Having my artwork juried by Michael James into such a presti-

gious exhibition is something I will always be extremely proud of.

Another one of the four-plex works, *4-Friends*, was in *ArtQuilt Elements 2008* in Wayne, Pennsylvania, and was reviewed by Bruce Hoffman, the director of The Snyderman/Works Galleries in Philadelphia. Bruce wrote, "I very much liked the simple idea explored by Bonnie J. Smith in *4-Friends*. Four repetitive blocks containing repeated shapes and pattern with subtle color changes. Simple, powerful, successful: design and craftsmanship working together".

My idea to push the design further came from my love of the original *Togetherness* quilt. It's simple and direct, and I wanted to find some way I could keep that design around me every day in a functional piece. I eventually came up with the idea of a purse. A clutch is my favorite purse design; it allows me to carry the essentials. I call my creations *Opera Purses*.

I started by measuring one of my old purses to figure out how large I wanted my clutch to be. My biggest concern was making sure the closing flap included all of the large, curved part of the design. I used fabric, batting, and a layer of Timtex™ to create the clutch. Quilting gave the purse more texture and stability. I used a

See "Expanding," page 36



Left: *4-Friends*, 36" x 36", © 2007

Below: *Gold Purse*, 6" x 12" x 2.5", © 2008



photo by Gregory Case



# Thinking of getting a studio space?

by Joyce Hanlon

**H**ave you ever thought about having your own studio space, separate and apart from your residence? I took the plunge several years ago and would like to share some thoughts about finding space and what effect a studio might have on your artwork.

When it comes to studio space, the adage “let the buyer beware” is good advice. My first studio was part of a small building rehab. There were to be four artist studios, and I was the first to take occupancy. About a month after I set up shop, I arrived to find the front door locked with a notice instructing tenants to contact the building owner’s attorney. It turns out that my landlord was a tenant, subleasing the space to me. Since he hadn’t paid the rent in several months, the building owner was terminating his lease. It took me several weeks, and an attorney, to retrieve my equipment and security deposit.

My next space proved to be equally disastrous. This studio was in a well-known artist building in the area. I was familiar with the space, but what I didn’t know was that the studio was located next to an active factory that ran until 8 p.m. each night and all day on Saturday. I had to buy noise-cancelling headphones to block out the buzz from the cutting machines. Worse yet, fine dark particles were drifting into my studio, so I had to cover up all surfaces every night and wipe them down again the next morning before working. Not exactly an ideal environment for working with textiles! Fortunately, the landlord was sympathetic, and I was able to break the lease.

The good news is that I finally landed great space in an active and thriving artist studio building. Since there is a shortage of studio space in the greater Boston area, available studios are snatched up quickly. My

280 sq. ft. space leases for about \$21/ft, almost \$6,000 annually, which includes utilities and heat (not an insignificant cost in the Northeast.) I signed a five-year lease to cap annual increases.

The previous studio debacles influenced my decision to invest in premium space. My current studio is part of a well-managed building with 62 studios with full floor-to-ceiling walls and large windows. It is open 24/7, has good security, and the owners are committed to providing good value for the artist tenants. Considering the \$600/sq.ft. residential real estate costs in Boston, a studio rental is a sensible alternative.

My studio is a 15-minute drive from my home. This travel time creates a meaningful psychological and emotional division from all of the activities that happen at home. Quilting is the sole reason for making the trip.

The studio space affords me the opportunity to have all of the essential workstations up and running at the same time. There is a huge old hutch to store fabrics where I can see them and be inspired, as well as plenty of shelving for reference material. A large sewing table with an L-shaped configuration allows me to keep fabric and resources close at hand. A cutting table, raised to prevent backaches, provides an efficient working surface and a place to test out fabric combinations. There is an area where the ironing board is always ready. The biggest benefit is a design wall about eight feet wide and as high as I can reach. If I’m working on small projects, I can have multiple projects going at once.

There is one more benefit, which at my stage of artistic development is very significant. I haven’t been quilting for very many years, and I am still on my way to finding my

artistic voice, what some might call “signature style.” The studio allows me to hang several finished pieces at once. It gives me the opportunity to consider the strong and weak points of each work, and to consider what my next direction should be. It also generates meaningful discussions with my studio neighbors.

Since I’m the only textile artist in the building, my work space is somewhat of a novelty. I’ll never forget the day a studio neighbor came by to look at my work. His comment was, “Oh, I see, you paint with fabric!” In today’s academic art world, the myriad possibilities of expression that don’t include painting are often given short shrift. Once someone gets beyond the thought that quilting is something for grandmothers, our discussion becomes a rich mutual exchange about color, composition, and expression. We also discuss more mundane topics like framing and how to price an artwork.

I have participated in several open studios to date and have reached the point where I now have repeat visitors who want to see what new projects are on display. I have also begun to make contact with gallery owners who like my artwork and are interested in exploring the possibility of working together. Open studios also provide a strong motivation to finish a piece!

I don’t consider myself a professional quilter yet, but I believe that working in a studio will ultimately allow me to make that transition. When I close the door to the studio, I’m alone. It’s just me, the fabric, and an idea. No interruptions, no temptations, just the unlimited possibilities of inspiration. ▼

*SAQA active member Joyce Hanlon is an art quilter living in Watertown, Massachusetts. She is a member of the Joy Street Artists web site [www.joystreetartists.org](http://www.joystreetartists.org).*

# What judges look for

by Morna McEver Golletz

*Reprinted from The Professional Quilter™ with permission.*

**Y**ou've just finished your latest quilt, are proud of your accomplishment, and want to show it off. You first share it with your family, then with your small quilting "bee," and finally take it to show and tell at your next guild meeting. For some quilters, this is enough. For others, it is not. Many quilters want to see how their quilts stack up against the competition, whether that is hanging the quilt in a local, non-judged show or entering it in a major juried and judged competition. In addition to gaining recognition for your quilts, you also educate other quilters and the general public about quilting and its standards. For local guilds, this is often a primary reason for holding a show. Additionally, if your quilt is entered in a judged show, you can set goals for improvement based on feedback from the judges, or your own comparison with winning quilts. And, of course, you might just win a prize, either a ribbon, cash, or merchandise.

Impartiality in judging is important, and one way this is done is through the use of a panel of independent judges, usually three. Judges can be trained and certified by the National Quilting Association, or they can be trained through experience. They all adhere to similar standards of judging.

Judging can take place either before or after the quilts are hung in a show, and each method has advantages.

Judging quilts after they are hung allows the visual impact of the quilt to be better appreciated. Judging quilts before they are hung is usually faster than after hanging, but visual impact takes second place to the ability to view the workmanship.

Judges often use scorecards or evaluation forms, and either a point

system, an elimination system, or a combination of the two, to evaluate the individual entries. The point system uses a predetermined maximum number of points to judge specific areas. For example, 20 points for color and design, 20 points for construction, 15 points for finishing, etc., with the total of 100 points. Each quilt is judged on its own merits, and the quilt with the highest total number of points is awarded first place.

The elimination system, on the other hand, allows each judge to evaluate a quilt, make comments on its technique, and offer feedback for improvement. If the judge feels the quilt should be held for an award consideration, it is put aside. If not, it is released from the competition portion. After the quilts are judged in this preliminary fashion, the held quilt is compared to others in its category, and the winners are determined.

Neither system is perfect. Regardless, judges evaluate quilts against the same standards. Here are commonly held standards that judges use:

## General Appearance

- The quilt makes an overall positive statement upon viewing.
- The quilt is clean and "ready to show," i.e., no visible marks, no loose threads, no pet hair, no offensive odors, etc.
- The quilt's edges are not distorted. This is easier to gauge when the quilt is hung.

## Design and Composition

- All the individual design elements of the quilt—top, quilting, choice of fabric, sashes, borders, embellishments, finishing—are unified.
- The design is in proportion and balanced.
- Borders or other edge treatments enhance the quilt's appearance.
- The colors are harmonious and

appropriate for the quilt.

- Color provides interest and movement to the quilt.
- The materials are suitable to the design and function of the quilt.
- The quilting design enhances the top design.
- The quilting design is in proportion to the top design and is planned to fill the spaces.

## Workmanship

- Piecing is precise, corners match and points are sharp.
- Seams, including those of sashing and borders, are secure, straight and flat.
- Appliqué is attached with matching thread, when appropriate, and is smooth.
- Curved pieces, whether pieced or appliquéd, are smooth.
- Shadowing of dark fabrics under light fabrics is not apparent.
- Decorative thread work is appropriate to design and well executed.
- Embellishments are attached securely and are appropriate.
- Special techniques, such as trapunto, photo transfers, embroidery, etc., are executed effectively, and complement the quilt design.
- Quilting stitches are even and consistent in length over the quilt top and back.
- Tension of quilting stitches is even, particularly when done by machine.
- Quilting stitches are straight where intended and curved where intended.
- If the quilt is tied, the ties are uniform and secure.
- The amount of quilting is sufficient and appropriate for the design of the quilt top.

See "Judges" on page 35

# Video documenting your artwork

by V Kingsley

**D**ocumenting the process of quilt making and the stories that accompany the fabric is what really excites me! This is partly because I'm easily bored, partly because the quilts I make are usually on commission, and partly because I do not spend a lot of time with the quilts after I have created them. The process is all there is. I love the journey, and then I love to share the journey with others through the World Wide Web.

## Background

My journey into quilt making began with handwork as a child, moving into novice quilting and quilt restoration in the mid 1980s. My first quilt commissions came in the 1990s, and my art quilt commissions began in 2001.

In 2003, however, my quilting came to a screeching halt when I went blind. I had severely dry eyes due to complications with cancer and an allergic reaction to chemo. I could no longer open my eyes. My sight was reduced to quick snapshots (like the camera-shutter), and all I could see were undefined shapes on a color scale from black to gray and peach to orange.

When my eyesight was restored with a new technique using prosthetic lenses from the Boston Foundation for Sight in 2005, the first thing I wanted to do, after seeing my family, was to make a quilt to say "thank you" to the Foundation. I made a 2.5' x 3' wall hanging of a giant crazy-quilted eyeball. At some point in the process of making that quilt, I realized that it might be a good idea to document what I was doing—to tell the story behind this giant eyeball. I took snapshots along the way and made them into a slide show with the story in accompanying text. It was my first documentary.

## Documentation

In this new digital age, it is imperative that we know how to document our work. Maybe you take your own photographs; maybe you hire a studio photographer to shoot them for you. Maybe you use film, or maybe you have gone digital. It is hard to imagine a modern, professional quilter who does not photograph his or her artwork.

There really is no substitute for one decent photograph of a finished quilt that can be printed with accurate colors. There are professional photog-

raphers—I've recently been working with a very talented woman named Erica Crawford in Santa Cruz, California, but there are many others: Gregory Case, Ben Peoples, etc.; just Google "quilt photographer."

Printed photographs are for your hand-held portfolio or the glossy postcard you get at the fabric store check-out counter. Digital images are necessary for juried shows, or as a photo to accompany a magazine article or pattern book.

Video documentation is a dynamic way to reach the public, to promote your art, your process, your passion, and your merchandise. Videos can reach a worldwide audience in a way that glossy postcards, books, and quilt shows never can. All it takes is a digital camera and time.

One way I use videos is for my iPod. They become a portable portfolio and entertainment wrapped up in one. I carry my entire portfolio of still images and videos on a contraption the size of a makeup compact in my purse. As they say, a picture is worth a thousand words.

Videos can be used on Internet channels, as vodcasts, they can be used on RSS feeds in tandem with online journaling and blogs, in classes with children, with our guilds—they are simply another way for people to experience our passion.

I use videos on the Internet: YouTube and Google Video are two of the most popular sites that allow us to post videos. After the video is uploaded, I can forward the link to other people.

What I love about YouTube is that it is marketing for me. When some-

continued on next page



V Kingsley with *I Am Mermaid*

one types “art quilt” into the YouTube search engine, they might find videos of *SAQA Journal* editor Carolyn Lee Vehslage or a number of other art quilters. But no matter which one the user picks, YouTube will list my video as a suggested related video in the sidebar.

### Digital cameras

I like the ease, size, and quality of my Casio Exilim 6.0 digital camera. About the size of a modern cell phone, it takes both digital stills and video up to several minutes long.

Four things to look for in a camera:

- I recommend at least a 5 or 6 megapixel camera for this level of work.
- The LED (light emitting diode) viewer in the back of the camera should be big enough to see what you are doing. A 2x3-inch LED is pretty good. The bigger the LED, the bigger the camera, so it's a trade-off.
- Make sure the camera has a digital video recording feature with at least a 3-minute or higher limit for the recording time. Mine is limited only by the size of the memory card.
- Make sure that you can read the menu and navigate the buttons on the camera. They are all different. I have had digital cameras that had buttons too small for my fingers, which was very frustrating. You may not understand everything on the menu, but you should at least be able to navigate through the pages of the menu with ease.

Try out, look at, hold, and compare cameras in the store. If you want to support your local business people, buy locally. It's usually cheaper online. Google the name and model number of the item you want and Google will give you a number of choices including eBay listings and refurbished models.

Make sure the camera comes with a warranty and keep all of your paperwork and receipts.

There are excellent tutorials that show visually what I will be explaining. They are an excellent supplement to this article. Just Google “Windows Movie Maker Tutorial” or “iMovie Tutorial,” and you will get pages of step-by-step tutorials to choose from.

The videos I create are made from a combination of .avi movie file clips and/or .jpg digital photographs. Because the videos are condensed before they can be uploaded to the Internet, the quality and size of the photographs for my web video are nowhere near the quality and size of a ready-to-print file that I would need for a glossy postcard.

### Set Up

I begin my documentary by taking photographs using the standard Internet image size of 640 x 480 pixels. Set the camera for economy-sized photos and video at the outset, or take high-quality images and resize in a software program like Adobe PhotoShop®. You can make a photograph with a larger number of pixels smaller, but you cannot make a photograph with a small number of pixels larger.

If you talk in front of your quilt during your movie, I recommend combining any “talking head” shots with other visuals and music in the finished project. I think it's tough to hold the viewers' interest with a talking head or with voice audio alone. On the whole, the Internet viewer is driven by the desire for the visual.

### Considerations

The first thing I do is to take a series of photographs and very short videos of the process of making a quilt. Sometimes I take many, many pictures along the way so that I can line them all up, almost like an old-fashioned flipbook or stop-motion film (think of time-lapsed photography of an opening flower).

The best way to photograph, even for the web, is to have a tripod for the camera and diffused light from both sides in front of the subject matter, close to a 45-degree angle. I

don't have the time, space, or frankly, the patience to set up a professional photo shoot every 10 minutes in my studio, but luckily for me, the Internet does not demand that I do so. I usually work on a design wall and just click away, capturing the drama of the changes. Yes, I definitely lose the true colors when I use a flash. Yes, I lose the texture and the tiny stitches of the quilting, but that isn't what a video is about. A video is about the process of the quilt, the story in the fabric, the emotion, the step-by-step action. If someone wants texture, color, and beautiful lighting, show them your portfolio or bring them to a quilt show.

Once I have the photographs (.jpg files on my camera) and the videos (.avi files on my camera), I upload them into a folder on my hard drive by connecting a cable from my camera to my computer. On a Mac I see an icon of my camera drive; in Windows, I search for that auxiliary drive. Once in the drive, I drag and drop the .jpps and .avi files into a folder on my desktop.

Use your favorite movie-making software, such as iMovie on the Mac (I have 4.0.1) or Windows Movie Maker for the PC. These programs should be bundled into the operating systems and can be found in the Applications folder. If you would like to download them for free, go to my web site, [www.alotoflife.com](http://www.alotoflife.com), and click the buttons on the bottom of my LINKS page.

### Let's make a movie

There are 8 steps to go from raw data on your hard drive to a video that can be seen on any computer in the world:

- Import data into the movie-making program.
- Add music.
- Create a timeline or story board.
- Create transitions.
- Create video effects.

- Create titles and credits.
- Save the finished product.
- Upload the movie to the Internet.

I work exclusively on a Mac, but Windows Movie Maker is easy to use also. Sometimes I alter the images in a photo editing software program like Adobe Photoshop, but you don't have to. I import my photos into iPhoto and then I launch iMovie. For the .avi video files, I just drag and drop the video files onto the clipboard pane of the movie program. I keep them there until I'm ready to use them. With Windows, import the files from the file menu in the movie making program.

Now it's time to add the audio. To make it super-duper easy, I try to make the videos and photographs fit into the length of my chosen song—about 2-4 minutes. (A YouTube video has to be less than 10 minutes long.) I suggest choosing a song, or combination of songs, that have some relationship to the artwork you are showing. This really adds to the overall effect of the video. It's a multi-media world now, and videos need movement and audio. Familiarize yourself with copyright law and ethical uses of music in videos.

I import the music as an MP3 file from iTunes. On Windows, just import the music file from the File menu. The .avi files have the audio portion of the video in the file. It can be separated from the video using the File menu. Another thing I do is to record my voice on my digital video camera. I take the audio files from my camera and turn them into MP3 files by saving them into iTunes.

For example, say I take a video of myself free-motion quilting either by having a friend take the video, or setting up my camera on a tripod. It's fun to watch, but the sound of the machine in the background might not be the best audio to keep the viewer engaged. I separate the audio from the visual and replace the audio

with either music or audio of myself explaining what free-motion quilting is, and how I do it.

The audio can be edited at any point in the process. I usually fade the music in and combine a couple of songs for longer movies. Sometimes I have time to do an audio explanation of what I did in my process. Sometimes I just want to get the video out there, so I keep it simple.

### Storyboard

Once I have the music and images imported, I can set up the storyboard or timeline. Video is dragged onto the timeline in the same way, but usually needs to be edited down. To edit a video clip, use the Split command (on the Preview pane in Windows or from the Edit menu on the Mac), and take the part of the clip that you don't want and delete it or drag it up onto the Clip pane to use later.

Both programs use the concept of a timeline. The photos are imported from your photo file folder (or in my case, from iPhoto) and dragged onto the timeline in the order in which I want them to appear in the finished video. Photos can be shown for long periods of time (like 6-10 seconds), if I want to get a good look at something, or if I'm explaining something in depth. They can be resized to a much shorter time (1 or 2 seconds) if I want the images to blend together to make a stop-motion sequence.

Once all the images are where I want them on the timeline or storyboard, and the audio tracks are laid in, it's time to get fancy. Sometimes I add transitions between the photos, and sometimes I don't. I don't use transitions if I want a stop-motion effect. I like to add titles. I think it's imperative to add credits if I'm using photographs that can be credited to photographers, or music that belongs to someone else. Most importantly, I want to point viewers to my web site so that they can discover more of my artwork. When it's all finished, I save the project.

After I save the project, I need to make a .mov file that can be read by Quicktime or Windows Media Player. From the File menu, choose "Share" to see several options: whether to share it in an email, for a video camera, on a DVD, or for Quicktime. I always make a Quicktime .mov file with the best resolution (or frames per second) that I can. I then go back and make a Quicktime compressed file for web streaming or for CD Rom. I choose whatever will get me closest to 100 megabytes but not more, because YouTube videos cannot be greater than 100 MB.

### It's showtime

Now that I have a finished video compressed to the right size, it's time to upload it onto the Internet. I go to Google Video or YouTube.com and set up an account. Then I click on the button that says "Upload Video." It walks me through the process, and it's super easy!

It's important to make sure that I put tags (keywords for search engines) that best describe my artwork. For example, I almost always include "art" and "quilt" along with "quilter" and "documentary" plus any special features of the quilt like "mermaid" or "New Orleans." A snappy description in the description box doesn't hurt either. Once I have uploaded my video, it takes at least 30 minutes for it to post to the Internet so that people can see it.

You can find my latest video on my YouTube channel, [www.youtube.com/vkingsley](http://www.youtube.com/vkingsley).

I hope you will have a fun time with the learning process. It can be frustrating at times (I make new mistakes every time I make a video), but each one gets better and easier. Enjoy, and start filming! ▼

*SAQA professional artist member V Kinsley is an art quilter who works mainly on commissions. She lives in Felton, California, and her web site is [www.alotoflife.com](http://www.alotoflife.com).*

## My experience at the Summer Institute

by Heather G. Stoltz

In August of 2008, I had the privilege of serving as one of two artists in residence at the National Havurah Committee's Summer Institute in Rindge, New Hampshire. NHC is a nondenominational, multigenerational, egalitarian, and volunteer-run network of diverse individuals and communities, dedicated to Jewish living and learning, community building, and tikkun olam (repairing the world).

Their annual Summer Institute, which is often described as a Jewish hippie summer camp, is a week-long retreat of Jewish learning, sharing, and growth for almost 400 participants from all over North America. It reflects all denominations and persuasions from secular to orthodox, intermarried, multi-racial, and newcomers to Jewish life. As an artist in residence, I taught a class called *Translating Text into Textile*, gave a presentation on my artwork to the entire community, and guided the children in the Kids Camp through a fiber art project.

I learned about NHC when I was in New York City pursuing an M.A. at the Jewish Theological Seminary. I had discovered a couple of independent minyanim (Jewish prayer groups not affiliated with any denomination). One spring, several attendees at a group called Kol Zimrah started talking about an upcoming summer retreat that sounded like an amazing extension of this unique community. I didn't attend at that time but did go the following year, after I completed my degree and moved out of the city.

I had found myself craving the enthusiastic Jewish community I had left behind, so I loved every minute of the intense week of study, prayer, and song. I sent an application to be an artist in residence two years later. That application was rejected with a note encouraging me to try again the

following year, explaining that the volunteer committee that selects the artists changes each year. So, with a few more lines on my résumé and nothing to lose, I applied again the following year, and to my surprise and delight I was selected as one of the 2008 artists in residence.

Since I am still in the beginning stages of my art journey, it felt like a huge and terrifying step toward accepting the label "artist." After receiving the news in December 2007 that I was to be an AIR in August of 2008, I had 9 months to convince myself that I was truly an artist, so I could act accordingly at the Summer Institute. After several months of thinking, planning, and sewing, I was ready to embrace the title and share my artwork with the NHC community.

My first task, after arriving on campus at Franklin Pierce University, was to give an introductory talk to the community. I put together a PowerPoint® presentation of my artwork titled *Quilting our Jewish Journeys*. I explained how I discovered fiber art and talked about the stories that I depict in my artwork.

I was a little nervous about giving a formal presentation. I placed the screenshots of my journal quilts at the end of the presentation and concluded with a short exercise. I encouraged everyone who attended to create a visual representation of an important moment in their lives using a series of guided questions to help them translate experiences into color, line, and shape.

It was exciting to see people intently drawing, reliving their chosen moments, as they sat scattered around the room. After a few minutes, I encouraged everyone to share their drawings with one or two other people and explain as much of the story behind it as they were comfort-

able doing.

I was moved by the depth of these quick sketches, which represented moments of joy, wonder, sorrow, and confusion. I really wanted to see how each of them would have represented these pieces in fabric, but the evening presentation didn't provide time for quilting.

The class met for about an hour and a half each morning for four days. I entered my classroom that first day to find 22 students ranging in age from 11 to 65, including experienced sewers and quilters, people who had never sewn before, and everything in between. I knew that the varied skill levels would be a challenge, so I had carefully created lesson plans that would allow me to teach basic techniques to those who needed them, while those who knew what they were doing could work independently. It all looked so nice and neat on paper, but by the end of the first class, I knew that all of my lesson plans had to be completely reworked.

Everything went according to plan for most of that first class as I guided them through an exercise. I wanted to get them thinking about translating text into textile by interpreting the theme of the Summer Institute (Blessed is the One who spoke the world into being) into a visual representation. We talked about the many ways that this theme, which comes from the morning liturgy, can be interpreted, and how each interpretation could be rendered artistically. Once the process was clear, it was time to move on to the design phase of their personal pieces.

Via email beforehand, I had also asked each participant to bring an inspiration source that they were to focus on for the remainder of the week. It could be any text: a favorite quote, a poem, prayer, or story from any source. Using the same steps we

## Reflections of Eve: The Garden

30" x 30", © 2003 Heather G. Stoltz



went through as a group, the students took their personal inspirational text and started sketching.

It was at this point that I faced an unexpected challenge that a teacher shouldn't complain about—too much enthusiasm! Some people started quietly sketching, others knew immediately what they wanted to do and started pulling fabrics. The rest of the class was having trouble getting started on their sketches and needed a little support. In the last 5 minutes of class, the room was transformed from a quiet space full of creative potential energy into a frenzied room full of fabric pieces, questions, and comments, leaving me feeling simultaneously overwhelmed and energized. I was excited to see what would transpire, but nervous about how I would be able to harness this energy and give each person in the class the attention they needed.

That night, I revised my lesson plans. Over the next few days, I let each person work at her/his own pace, assisting with design or technique questions as needed. I gave brief lessons to anyone who wanted to learn specific techniques. As the week progressed, everyone was engrossed in his/her work and feeling the pressure to complete their piece by Friday afternoon, so we could hang the artwork for our Shabbat art show.

Since our classroom was not being

statement.

Rachel Sommer was one of the people quietly working away on her quilt all week. Every time I checked in with her, she was busy with her crazy quilt background, and on the two pieces that were appliquéd on top. One of those pieces contained her inspiration quote: the verse from Genesis when Sarah learns that she is going to have a son and laughs.

Only after I saw her artist statement, which told the story of her struggle to conceive, and her own laughter upon learning that she was six weeks pregnant with her first child, did I fully appreciate the power of the piece. Each piece held its own surprise that Friday afternoon and I could not have been more proud and impressed by the depth of the artwork my students created in four short days. They were able to truly translate their inspiration texts into textile art which was meaningful to them and the community. I have posted most of their artwork on my web site at [www.sewingstories.com/nhc08.htm](http://www.sewingstories.com/nhc08.htm).

Also on display at the end of the week was the artwork created by the children in the Kids Camp. Again, using the theme of the Institute, I worked with the 6-9 and 10-14-year-olds separately. I asked each group to tell me about Creation.

When the 14 younger students started recounting the 7 days of

used for anything else that week, students slowly started arriving earlier, staying later, and coming back during other sessions. It was a hectic Friday afternoon, but everyone completed his/her artwork along with a short artist

Creation, I asked them to work in pairs and assigned each group a different day of Creation. I walked around the room, asking each group about their piece, and was humbled by one group working on the seventh day (Shabbat). As I approached this pair, I saw that they had placed a few squares of fabric on the background and had declared the piece completed.

I questioned them about the piece, not expecting much response because I assumed they were not fully engaged in the project. The young boy pointed to a brown square and explained, "This is the Torah." He then went on to point out the Shabbat candles, represented by two yellow squares, and glue for the wicks. A cluster of blue squares stood for the earth. I asked if anything was missing from the Shabbat piece, and after a moment of thought he told me that nothing was lacking. At that moment, I learned not to assume or judge anyone's art. This work, which at first glance seemed to be random and thoughtless, was in fact, just as valid a representation as the other artwork created that week.

At our final art show, all of the pieces were hung together. The spirit of the NHC, where all voices are heard and respected equally regardless of age, belief, or background, was expressed through fiber art. Each quilt told the story of its creator, and each was valued for its underlying meaning and ability to speak to the community.

Beyond that, the art of quilting has proven to be a powerful medium which has the capacity to unite generations. I was proud to help facilitate this visual conversation and to introduce the NHC community to the wonderful world of fiber art. ▼

*SAQA active member Heather G. Stoltz is a fiber artist living in New York, New York. Her web site is [www.sewingstories.com](http://www.sewingstories.com).*

# To publish or to be published

## That is the question — Part II

by Carol Ann Waugh

In the last issue, I talked about the advantages and disadvantages of having a traditional publisher publish your book. This article will help you to decide whether self-publishing is the route for you to take.

At one time, there was a stigma associated with self-published books, but new technology like Print on Demand (POD) and new suppliers like BookSurge and LightningSource have changed that perception over the past few years. Today, it's difficult to tell the difference in quality or content between traditionally published and self-published books.

Becoming your own publisher entails learning some important new things, but there are many resources out there to help you. Before you jump in, I'd like to share some overall information about this important decision.

First of all, there are many "vanity" presses who will try to get your business. These shops are one-stop companies that will take you through the publishing process and charge you between \$15,000 and \$20,000 to

get even one copy of your book into print. These companies have been around for a long time, and in my opinion they are a complete rip-off for authors. Most of these companies overcharge for providing limited services and require that you sign over all your rights in the process. In addition, they do nothing to help you sell your book other than provide a media kit and a list of publications you have to contact on your own. It's hard to separate the vanity publishers from a real publisher, but the general rule of thumb is find out who is paying whom.

Publishing your own book isn't rocket science. All you need to do is understand the process and find the best people to do the job.

The first thing you need to do is complete a book proposal as though you were submitting one to a traditional publisher. This will be your initial test of concept. Is there room in the market for your title, and do you have a good way to market it? Once you and your friends (yes, circulate this around, show it to book store buyers, quilt store buyers, etc.)

agree that the book is unique and has a good chance to sell, you need to do the hard part. Write the book.

The first draft should be written (no photos, illustrations, or anything special) to the best of your ability. Don't stress over it too much, because the next step will help you in the process.

Hire a freelance editor. You want to find someone with experience in editing craft and art books. Editors can do many things to help you refine your book. They can act in many different roles: developmental editor, coach, content editor, copyediting, indexing, proofreading, substantive editing, and even help with writing. You can also find editors who serve as project editors, who can help you with the entire process from conception through finished book. There are associations of these editors, such as the Northwest Independent Editors Guild and the Freelance Editors' Association of Canada (FEAC). These are good places to start to find someone you can work with.

The next step is to hire a graphic designer. Often, the editor you have chosen will have connections with designers they've worked with in the past. Most traditional publishers use freelance designers, so it's fairly easy to find designers with experience in designing craft and art books. Just look at your own library of books. Often these designers are given credit on the inside of the book.

Once your manuscript is finalized, you'll need to decide how you are going to illustrate your book: how many and what kind of illustrations you need. Often the graphic designer can either execute the photos and illustrations or knows someone to recommend. You'll need to decide how you are going to print your book, because the design specifications are sometimes particular to each printer.

### *Six Degrees of Separation*

40" x 42"

© 2007 Carol Ann Waugh



See "To publish" on page 36



# My first year as a SAQA member

by Casey Puetz

**H**ave you ever joined an organization to learn more about yourself by rubbing elbows with like-minded people?

Have you ever been so inspired by that organization, that you grew beyond your wildest dreams?

Have you ever looked back a year later to realize the organization's impact?

Well, I have. In the Spring of 2007, I joined SAQA and attended the 2007 SAQA conference entitled *Bridging the Gap: Quilt World to Art World* in Athens, Ohio. The topics included Crossing the Technology Bridge and Enriching your Marketing and Artistic Skills. They were well-timed for my evolving artistic direction.

I started as a traditional quilter in the early 90s. By the time of the 2007 conference, my pieces had become contemporary and had been included in exhibits with the Milwaukee Art Quilters (MarQ) and the Professional Art Quilt Alliance (PAQA).

The conference was planned to coincide with the opening of *Quilt National '07*. Seeing such a wide variety of art quilts, meeting the artists, and spending unlimited time examining techniques up close was a real slice of heaven. Kasia, another art quilter, drove with me to the conference, and we made a pact to meet every two weeks to support each other's work and ambition. Our "Stand by Me" meetings continue to this day.

SAQA opened another door by way of an invitation to donate a 12x12-inch artwork for the 2007 reverse auction fundraiser. Fellow SAQA member Betty Ford purchased my piece *Pseudoglyph I*. This art quilt was the first of a series of six similar pieces

that use discharged black fabric as the background and made-up characters as the focal point.

Have you ever found a UFO in your studio and decided to resurrect it? Well, I have, and that one piece became a series of three pieces. Two of the three artworks, *Market Day I* and *Market Day II*, were juried into SAQA's *Balancing Act* exhibition at the Lawrence Street Gallery in Ferndale, Michigan. Imagine my elation at being juried into a show on my first attempt.

Shortly thereafter, a digital image of *Pseudoglyph II* was submitted for

inclusion in SAQA's *Portfolio 14*. My very rudimentary skills using Photoshop Elements® and a digital camera caused me all kinds of headaches. The image made it onto a CD, but just barely. There's much more for me to learn in this department. The image was included in the full-color book that has been widely distributed to art museums and interior designers.

Have you ever dreamed of having a solo show? I have. My previous SAQA successes gave me the courage to approach the owners of our artist-friendly downtown bookstore. Numerous fine art exhibits have been hung there over the years. So, on one particularly courageous day, I walked in and introduced myself. We had an old-fashioned, low-tech, conversation to establish interest and preliminary dates. Through the kindness and guidance of Norm and Eve Bruce who own Martha Merrell's Books, my first solo show became a reality. *emer.gence: coming into view* was displayed for six weeks, complete with an opening reception. Friends and family were tremendously supportive.

Guiding me through this process were various SAQA *Journal* articles. Especially useful were articles on press releases by Jake Finch, Eileen Doughty, and Ellen Lindner.

Wouldn't you know it, but right on the heels of preparing for the solo show, the mailman delivered an acceptance letter. *Keiko Study #1* was accepted for a Lark Books publication entitled *Creative Quilting with Beads*, which was released in the summer of 2008.

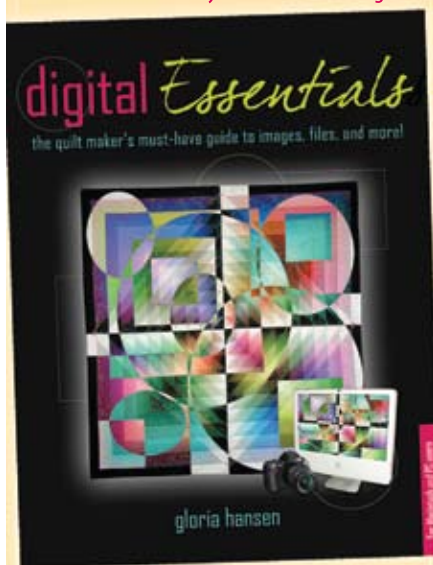
Have you ever wondered "What's next?" I have. The list of opportunities continues to grow, and at the time of this writing include: accepting an art walk invitation, signing two contracts to teach in new venues, upcoming dual exhibitions with



**Emergence I**  
33" x 13", © Casey Puetz

See "My first year" on page 34

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## My first year

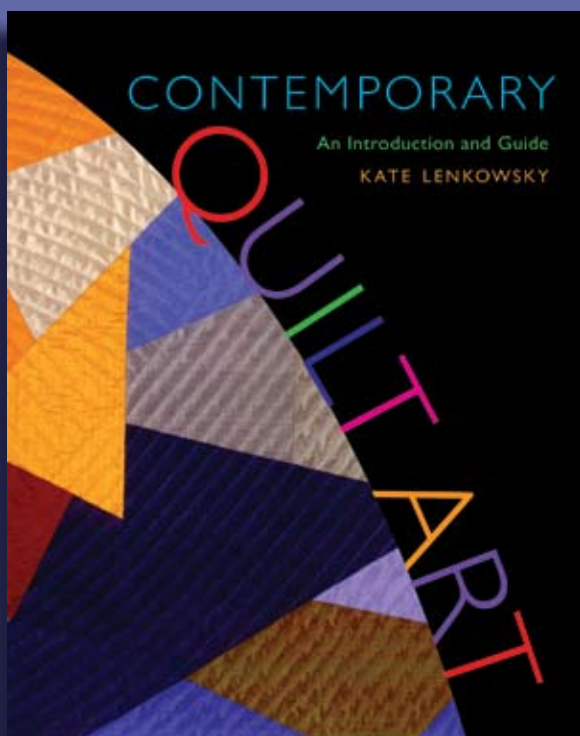
from page 33

Kasia at two art galleries, inclusion in a SAQA web site virtual gallery exhibit titled *Balance*, publication in SAQA's *Portfolio 15*, and participation in the SAQA 2008 reverse auction.

Have you ever said thank you to an organization that nurtured, taught, inspired and expanded you and your career? I have, and I do: Thank you, SAQA. ▼

*SAQA professional artist member Casey Puetz is a quilt artist and teacher living in Waukesha, Wisconsin. Her web site is www.caseypuetz.com.*

*Editor's note: All of the SAQA Newsletter and Journal articles are readable online on SAQA-U. Go to <http://www.saqau.wikispaces.net/Res+SAQA+Journal+Back+Issues> and log in with your ID and password.*



## Contemporary Quilt Art

An Introduction and Guide

Kate Lenkowsky

This beautifully illustrated book combines a well-researched history of studio quilts in the context of fine art and studio craft and includes an overview of educational resources and the marketplace. There are suggestions for buyers and collectors about what to look for, working with art consultants, and commissioning work. Advice about appraisals, insurance coverage, and the care of quilt art rounds out this guide.

"Like other crafts that have become highly collectible, art quilts are making the transition from being viewed solely as functional objects to being seen as the fine art pieces they are. A very important book for quilters and collectors alike."  
—Martha Sielman, Executive Director, Studio Quilt Art Associates

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## CREAM Award – Quilt Visions 2008



SAQA's Cathy Rasmussen Emerging Artist Memorial Award (CREAM) winner at *Quilt Visions 2008* is Leslie Joan Noble-Riley of Stokie, Illinois for her quilt *Plaid Constructions #3*. This award for a first-time exhibitor was established in the memory of past SAQA executive director Cathy Rasmussen and is totally funded by donations from SAQA members. In addition to the cash prize, as part of the award, Leslie will have a one-year membership in SAQA and a subscription to the *SAQA Journal*.

## Judges from page 26

- Starts and stops of the quilting stitch do not show. Any knots are popped into the batting.
- The finishing technique is appropriate for the quilt.
- Any binding is straight and applied so that it is flat and of a consistent width.
- Batting extends to fill the edge of the binding.

As noted, judges consider certain “standards” when evaluating quilts. The list is really quite extensive, but how do they decide which quilts are the prizewinners? And what is more important, design or workmanship? In the end, I think it comes down to design, the quilt with the greater visual impact. But even the quilt with the greatest visual impact cannot rescue poor workmanship. ▼

*Morna McEver Golletz is the editor and publisher of The Professional Quilter, a quarterly business journal for serious quilters offering judging and other business resources for quilters. To subscribe to The Professional Quilter or to sign up for a free monthly online newsletter, visit [www.professionalquilter.com](http://www.professionalquilter.com).*

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## Expanding from page 24

satin stitch to finish the edges.

The purses were well received at the 2008 SAQA Conference trunk show in Wayne, Pennsylvania. With encouragement from Carolyn Lee Vehslage and Deidre Adams, I approached the Dayle Dunn Gallery in Half Moon Bay, California, about selling them. When Dayle saw my purse design, her word was “exquisite” and she called it “functional art.”

About a year ago, I decided I wanted to learn more about curating textile exhibitions. Working with the nearby San Jose Museum of Quilt & Textiles seemed the obvious choice. I contacted Deborah Corsini, the curator at SJMQT. It has been a terrific opportunity. Learning how professional exhibitions are hung,

and the work behind the scenes, is very exciting. The team I work with is extremely professional. All members of the curating team are involved in some way in textiles, whether it is teaching, costume design, or quilting.

The physical work of hanging an exhibition can be grueling. Normally, the first day is spent taking the previous exhibition down, packing it up, and shipping it out. On the second day, it's exciting to place the new artwork on the walls.

The opportunity to see all the exhibited works up close has been completely gratifying. After volunteering for a year, I approached the SJMQT store director, and now my *Opera Purses* are on display in their museum shop. I am currently look-

ing for more exposure for the purses, either in print or in another gallery. I'm sure that if I keep working toward this goal, it will happen.

I want to thank SAQA and its membership for being so supportive and open. I enjoy attending meetings and I always come away with the feeling that the sky is the limit. SAQA has given me the knowledge that, yes, I can achieve my artistic goals if I work at them. The day I became a professional artist member was a turning point in my artistic career, one more step up the ladder of my plan. ▼

*SAQA professional artist member Bonnie J. Smith lives in San Jose, California, with her husband of 37 years. Her blog is [www.bonniejofiberarts.com](http://www.bonniejofiberarts.com).*

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## To publish from page 32

There are two things you need to think about when printing your book: the number of copies you think you'll need in the first six months, and your available financial investment. Obviously, the more you print, the less the unit cost of each book, but the more you'll spend in total cost. Printing 3,000 books will cost you thousands of dollars upfront (not to mention the cost of storing all those books). POD offers you a low-cost way to get a small inventory, but the unit cost increases substantially. Check out the POD printers such as LightningSource and BookSurge, as well as short-run printers like Hignell Book Printing (Canada) or Edward Brothers.

Once you have suppliers in place, begin developing your marketing plan. The Small Publishers Association of North America, and PMA: The Independent Book Publishers Association can help. Both offer annual conferences where you can make contacts with other publishers and climb the learning ladder quickly.

There are many advantages of publishing your book yourself, including

the ultimate satisfaction of learning new things and seeing the result of all your work. There is nothing like opening up that first box of books and thinking, “I did it all myself!”

The biggest disadvantages of publishing your own book are the upfront financial investment and the time to complete the process. It doesn't take many books to break even on the financial investment, and after that, you can make some serious money. Let's say you are a teacher and teach 200 students a year. If you sold them each a copy of your book at \$25 each, that would bring in an extra \$5,000 a year on top of

your teaching fees. If your book cost \$10,000 to print, you'll break even in two years.

Whichever way you choose to get published, I hope you find a way to add your voice and expertise to the quilting world. We all want to hear from you! ▼

*SAQA active member and CO/WY/UT SAQA representative, Carol Ann Waugh from Denver, CO, has co-authored three books on quilt making. Carol has started and sold two publishing companies (unrelated to quilting). Today, she earns her living as a publishing consultant, and is developing a career as an artist. Her web site is [www.carolwaughquilts.com](http://www.carolwaughquilts.com).*

### Resources:

BookSurge: [www.booksurge.com](http://www.booksurge.com)

LightningSource: [www.lightningsource.com](http://www.lightningsource.com)

Northwest Independent Editors Guild: [www.edsguild.org/](http://www.edsguild.org/)

Freelance Editors' Association of Canada (FEAC) [www.editors.ca/about\\_EAC](http://www.editors.ca/about_EAC)

Hignell Book Printing web site: [www.hignell.mb.ca](http://www.hignell.mb.ca)

Edwards Brothers web site: [www.edwardsbrothers.com](http://www.edwardsbrothers.com)

Small Publishers Association of North America: [www.spannet.org](http://www.spannet.org)

PMA: The Independent Book Publishers Association: [www.pma-online.org](http://www.pma-online.org)

**On The Cover:**

*Spring Thaw*, 31" x 21", © 2006 Leslie Rego



Leslie Rego is an award-winning full-time studio artist who loves color, texture, and pattern, and is constantly intrigued by the myriad combinations they produce. She uses hand-dyed and commercial silks, cottons, and velvets. *Spring Thaw* is from her *Meanderings* series, in which she combines curved sections to form a background for intricately embroidered vines, ferns, berries, leaves, thistles, and other forms of vegetation to form a serendipitous tribute to nature.

photo by F. Alfredo Rego

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# Meet your regional representatives

## Leni Levenson Wiener

New York co-representative  
[www.leniwiener.com](http://www.leniwiener.com)



Like so many girls of my generation, I first learned to sew in seventh grade Home Ec class. Although the skirt I made that semester could have been

considered my initial foray into abstraction, I was hooked. My parents bought me my first sewing machine (\$85 at Sears—with the cabinet!). My love of fabric must be genetic; my mother was an interior designer, her mother made custom hats. My heart still races every time I walk into a fabric store.

In college I studied art history and archaeology; I spent a season at the Tel Gezer Excavations in Israel, and completed my MA in Art Restoration/Conservation and Museology in Florence, Italy.

In 2001, I decided to change my life and began teaching traditional quilt classes. The following year, a business trip to Houston for new class ideas introduced me to the amazing world of art quilts. Everything came together for me; I knew I had found my medium.

I prefer to work in raw edge machine appliqué and thread painting, leaving the frayed edges and puckers that are inherently the nature of fabric. Presently, I use only commercially available fabric, and no other embellishment. It is my hope that viewers are drawn into my artwork in order to decide for themselves what the story is behind the image.

My first book, *Thread Painting*, was released in 2007, and a second book, *Photo-inspired Art Quilts*, will follow this spring. I continue to teach both traditional and art quilt techniques. My association with SAQA has exposed me to many extraordinary artists, and their inspiration has helped me grow as an art quilter.

## Jane Dávila

New York co-representative  
[www.janedavila.com](http://www.janedavila.com)



I am a self-taught fine artist who began my professional art career as a printmaker, specializing in intaglios and etchings. I was a studio artist for

many years, exhibiting and selling through galleries and art consultants nationwide. Then I took a few years off to start a family. I switched to fiber and textile as my main medium in 2002, but I have continued to incorporate paper and printmaking techniques in my artwork. The experience of living in Peru in the 1980s has had a lasting impact on my appreciation for the diversity of cultural expression and iconography, which shows up as a theme in my artwork. My art tends to be figurative and reflects natural subjects such as insects, fish, and flora.

Elin Waterston and I have written two books for C&T Publishing, *Art Quilt Workbook* (2007) and *Art Quilts at Play* (2009). Together, we recorded an instructional DVD, *Jane Dávila and Elin Waterston Teach You Art Quilt Basics*, in April 2008 in my studio in Connecticut. Writing and teaching are very satisfying ways to share my passion for art and fiber.

I also run a quilt shop (brick and mortar, as well as online) in the metropolitan New York City area with my mother, Claire Oehler. We host SAQA meetings, open to all members, once a month. We discuss professional topics like writing artist statements,



### *Tourist Season*

34" x 45"

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# Quick Notes

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

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

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

#### Deadlines for articles:

Summer: February 1

Fall: May 1

Winter: August 1

Spring: November 1

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

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**Caída Libre**, 10" x 10", ©2007 Jane Dávila



**Endangered Bliss**  
28" x 27" x 1.75", ©2006 C. Susan Ferraro

preparing portfolios, and setting up websites, and we share our artistic journeys. My husband, Carlos, is an abstract oil painter and sculptor, and there's nothing like having another artist around for support and critique. He completely gets it when I'm following the muse at 2 a.m.!

## C. Susan Ferraro

Connecticut representative  
[www.artisanscsf.com](http://www.artisanscsf.com)



My focus in art is wildlife and its many facets. I depict mammals, birds, sea life, and insects. I add dimension and inventive materials such as fiber-optic

lighting to my artwork. My artwork over the past two years has focused on endangered species and their role

in our planet's survival. My goal is to capture the audience's emotions, encouraging them to take that extra step to care for our endangered species and our Mother Earth.

I originally met SAQA Executive Director Martha Sielman while attending the SAQA regional group Fiber Revolution's second exhibition. The art quilts were so amazing. It was a turning point in my life to become a part of this talented group. Through inspiration and positive reinforcement from our members, I have sharpened my skills for creating quality artwork and made use of the many resources Fiber Revolution has to offer.

Our biannual SAQA Connecticut meetings are educational and fun. We have meetings in different locations,

many combined with fiber art exhibitions, focusing on subjects that all members can learn from. We always include a "secret" guest or giveaway. It's quite gratifying to see that members are eager to learn from one another through many of the topics we discuss.

Through SAQA and all the opportunities it has to offer, we can get the message out about our art quilts, including why they are important in our lives. SAQA's vibrant leaders, the *Journal*, informative conferences, regional meetings, SAQA-U, and all of the avenues SAQA can lead us through, are truly gifts for our members to embrace.