



photo by Beire Adams

**Changes**  
by Jo Fittsell

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## Thoughts from the president

by Judith Content



It's hard for me to believe, but this is my last *Journal* report as SAQA's president. Where did the time go? Three years as board member, one year as vice president, and two as president

flew by in a whirl of activity that at times left me breathless. Over the last six years, there have been many highlights, many challenges faced, and many friends made. It has been a real privilege working with, and getting to know, so many talented and dedicated SAQA members. It has also been an honor to work together with SAQA's regional representatives, board of directors, volunteers, staff members and our executive director, Martha Sielman.

Looking back, I am struck by the gigantic strides SAQA has made. Our *Journal* went from black & white to color, our membership grew by leaps and bounds, and our exhibition resume flourished. Conferences were successful on many

fronts, and collaborating with SDA in Philadelphia was a fabulous first. Beautiful exhibition catalogues and PAM portfolios expanded SAQA's visual library. Our web site now houses such a wealth of information, it is becoming *the* web site for art quilters and other arts professionals as well.

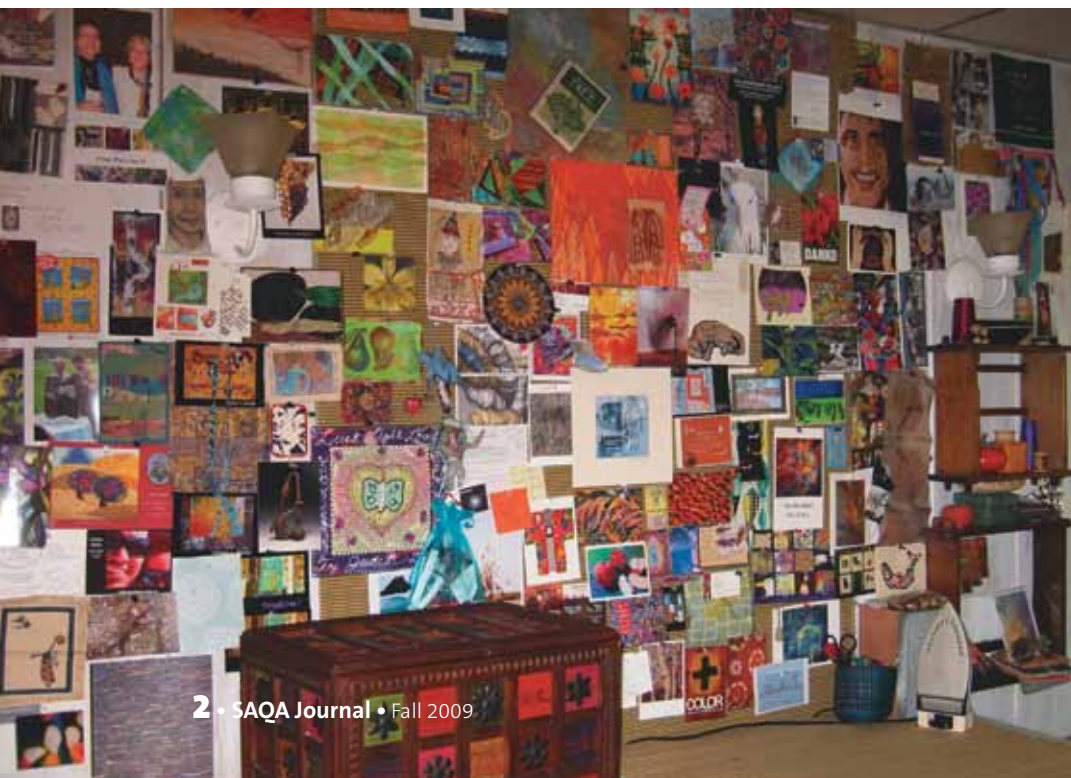
It's hard to remember a time before the SAQA University wiki, isn't it? It wasn't long ago, however, that this vital program was just a dream. Lisa Chipetine has a knack for making dreams come true. She is the visionary behind many of SAQA's most successful programs including SAQA-U, monthly mentorship calls, and the 20th Anniversary interviews with SAQA's founding members. The Visioning Project is Lisa's latest, an exciting venture focusing on professional development. She unveiled the Visioning Project at the Athens conference during the panel presentation: *SAQA's First 20 Years and Beyond*. (To learn more, go to [visioning.saqau.wikispaces.net](http://visioning.saqau.wikispaces.net)).

On September 30, I passed the president's baton to Lisa. I have

enjoyed working with her ever since she joined the board. A talented artist, savvy businesswoman, and tireless advocate on behalf of SAQA, Lisa inspires confidence, and I know I'm leaving you in extremely capable hands.

I want to thank all the SAQA members who sent unique and wonderful items for my inspiration wall. I also want to thank Lisa for orchestrating this amazing surprise at the SAQA *Art and Excellence Conference*. The contents of the box were so wonderful that I have created an entirely new inspiration wall in my studio dedicated to SAQA. Thank you one and all for the postcards, exhibition announcements, photographs, original art, dolls, pins, fabrics, yarns, shells, and most of all your thoughtful words of thanks and appreciation for my work as SAQA's president.

I shall enjoy having more studio time after stepping down as president, but I will miss the daily interactions with SAQA members, and especially Martha. Do keep in touch with postcards for my inspiration wall, and please come visit me if you are traveling through the Bay Area. Speaking of San Francisco, don't miss the 2010 SAQA/SDA Reinvention Conference March 19-20, 2010, at San Francisco State University. The conference will feature presentations by renowned artists and museum professionals, studio tours, and hands-on workshops. I hope to see you there!



Judith Content's new inspiration wall covered with items given by SAQA members.

# Report from the SAQA executive director

by Martha Sielman



**W**e have two new processes that I want to tell everyone about, both of which eliminate the need to burn and mail CDs: the new professional artist membership (PAM) application process, and the online exhibition jurying system.

SAQA now has a PAM review committee. The current committee consists of Linda Beach, Sally Sellers, and Leni Levenson Wiener. Next year, new committee members will be chosen from a pool of PAM volunteers. Aspiring PAMs are now asked to upload their applications—10 images of their work and their resumes—onto their Artist Profile pages in SAQA-U, rather than burning a CD and sending a package through the mail.

The committee meets by conference call every month or two to review all applications. Committee members can view an applicant's Artist Profile page simultaneously in SAQA-U and can discuss the merits of the application. Decisions have to be unanimous. This new process ensures a broad review of each application and should be easy for members to use.

SAQA has now moved all exhibition jurying to an online system as well. Developed by SAQA member Lisa Ellis for use by *Sacred Threads* in 2008, this online system allows SAQA members to upload images for jurying directly from their home computers, fill out the required information online, and pay using the SAQA website order form. It is no longer necessary to burn a CD, pay overnight postage rates (for those of us who procrastinate until the night before the deadline), and then worry

that entries haven't arrived. Jury fees will be raised slightly to cover the cost of the system, to \$30 for three entries. Hopefully, you will agree that the increase in cost is more than offset by eliminating the hassle of creating and mailing a CD.

Jurors will be able to log into the system and see the works in a special juror view that hides the artists' names and contact information. They will be able to make their selections there and review their choices, until they have chosen the final exhibition. The system will then be used to create a spreadsheet of the information necessary for the exhibition's curator, eliminating the need to find a volunteer to act as entries administrator. The exhibition committee has been working for over two years to find a system that met our requirements, and this system is perfect: simple, safe, and easy to use. ▼



## CREAM Award

SAQA's CREAM (Cathy Rasmussen Emerging Artist Memorial) Award is presented to an artist who is selected for Quilt National's prestigious exhibit for the first time. The Quilt National '09 winner is Susan Krueger for her quilt *Swallowing Roses*.

Susan says, "This piece is about falling for various societal myths regarding power, fame, beauty, luck, money, love – the things we, as women, wish for; our great expectations. Notice the tiny images from Mexican lottery cards, female celebrities from the entertainment section of the newspaper and fruit from seed catalogues that infer the psychological and political pressure put on today's women. Swallowing roses involves a lot of physical and emotional preparation."

### *Swallowing Roses*

41" x 30"  
©2007 Susan Krueger

## From the editor

by Carolyn Lee Vehslage



SAQA's *Art and Excellence* conference in Athens, Ohio, this past May was truly outstanding. This issue of the *Journal* has notes from the various workshops and panel discus-

sions so all members can gain valuable information that was shared throughout the three-day gathering. It was a wonderful opportunity for me to meet many members and talk about what you need in the *Journal* as professional artists and collectors.

Next March 19-21, 2010, SAQA and the Surface Design Association will co-host a conference called *Reinvention*. It will be held at the San Francisco State University. Friday's schedule starts with an opening

address by *Fiberarts Magazine* Editor Marci McDade. There will be talks by museum directors Jane Przybysz of the San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles, Stefano Catalani of the Bellevue Arts Museum, and Jill D'Alessandro of the de Young Museum of Art. Then there will be opportunities to visit several fiber exhibition openings at the SFSU galleries.

Saturday's panel discussions begin with an *Emerging Artists* panel with Bren Ahearn, Mung Lar Lam, and Lacey Jane Roberts that is moderated by Victor De La Rosa. Then Judith Shelby Lang, Linda MacDonald, and Lea Redmond will discuss "Environment art—Can art make a difference?" that is moderated by Linda Gass. This will be followed by a "Voices of Experience" panel with Michael Rohde, Consuelo Jimenez Underwood, and Carol Westfall,

moderated by Joan Schulze. Janet Koplos, guest editor of *American Craft*, will give the closing keynote speech.

Sunday's activities will include tours of the studios of Jean Cacicedo, Ana Lisa Hedstrom, Candace Kling, Richard Elliott, Karen Livingston and Robin Cowley, with the option of seeing an Amish quilt exhibition at the deYoung Museum of Art and Joan Schulze's exhibition at the San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles. There will be a variety of three-day workshops offered on March 22-24, following the conference.

Information and registration for the *Reinvention* conference and the three-day workshops are on the SAQA web site. I highly recommend attending, not only for the talks, panels, and tours, but also for the opportunity to network with professional artists, museum directors, and collectors.

## SAQA Visioning Project: Do you have a goal?

by Lisa Chipetine

In October 2009, SAQA launched the Visioning Project. All SAQA members who want to achieve a goal or dream within a year's time should participate. Your individual goal can be anything that you envision for yourself. It could be creating a body of work, having a solo exhibition, getting gallery representation, writing a book, selling your artwork, or anything else that you can dream up for yourself.

After making a public commitment to your dream, you will journal your steps toward making your goal come true through a special section set up on SAQA University (see [www.thevisioningproject.com](http://www.thevisioningproject.com)).

You will not be alone in your quest for your goal. There is a supportive, collaborative Visioning Team helping

you to determine what actions need to be taken to achieve your objectives. Along the way, you will report your progress and any problems you encounter as you work towards your goal.

For obstacles or issues that cannot be resolved within the Visioning Team, there is an advisory board that can be consulted on your behalf to offer potential solutions from their own set of experiences, which will in turn help you proceed on your journey. The advisory board consists of Judith Content, artist, curator, former president of SAQA; Karey Bresenhan, president and chief executive officer of Quilts, Inc.; Dr. Carolyn Mazloomi, independent curator, author, and artist; Jeanne Beck, artist, writer, public relations and marketing

expert; Regina Benson, artist, curator, business and marketing expert; Lisa Chipetine, business, operations and marketing executive, and artist; and Pokey Bolton, editor, Interweave Press.

Those SAQA members who have successfully achieved their goals by October 2010 will be included in a video documentary on the website. SAQA will publicize the video documentary with a press release and try to arrange for a meet-the-artist conference call with press and gallery contacts.

So how do you sign up for the Visioning Project? It's easy. There is a template in the Visioning Project section of SAQA-U where you publicly commit to your vision, make your

See "Visioning Project" on page 32

# Notes from the Art & Excellence conference

**T**he Art & Excellence conference (May 21-24, 2009), was a huge success. Below are notes from several key presentations.

Don Bacigalupi, director of the Toledo Museum of Art, gave the closing keynote address. It was a fascinating and concise history of modern art and where the art quilt fits into the museum scene today. His presentation, along with Alyson Stanfield's keynote address and the panel presentations, are available on DVD through the SAQA bookstore.

## Keynote Address: Tough Times Call for Tough Artists

Alyson B. Stanfield, curator, educator, art marketing consultant, author of *I'd Rather Be in the Studio: The Artist's No-Excuse Guide to Self Promotion* [www.artbizcoach.com](http://www.artbizcoach.com)

Notes by Carolyn Lee Vehslage

Alyson's book teaches artists how to market, promote, and sell their art. In addition to her extensive web site, she offers a weekly free online newsletter. She discussed highlights from her book and gave the audience a wake-up call: If you are an artist in pursuit of a professional career, you are not allowed excuses as to why you are not promoting yourself!

With illustrations of the dropping economy, Alyson urged artists not to wait until things get better to promote themselves. She said you will lose momentum and sales and risk having people forget about you. She calls this "losing connections with your fans." Get tough with your attitude, habits, and goals concerning your art. This means being very clear that you are dedicated to this life, setting and maintaining studio hours, and saying no to opportunities that don't fit your career goals. The professional artist's career is about

producing, selling, and promoting. Know that it's hard work.

Marketing and promotion don't have to be expensive. You can get more from less. Promoting your art really is about using your time wisely. Form a "tribe"—get connected to the people you know are important to your art and goals. The people you know are your most important asset. Nothing is more important than your personal mailing/contact list. Start meeting more people and getting your name out. Remember that we buy art from people we like and trust. Social networking builds relationships.

Harness the power of the Internet to promote directly to customers. Make sure your web site looks professional. Excellent photos are a must. If you are blogging, this must be kept fresh and updated on a regular basis. When you are on the Internet, behave as though the whole world is watching, because they *are*.

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Lisa Chipetine presenting Judith Content with a box of inspirational gifts as a thank-you for Judith's many years of service to SAQA.

Photos by Jeanne Marklin



Carol Taylor, Lorraine Carthew, Sue Dennis and Yvonne Porcella in front of the SAQA traveling trunk show.

You need to spread your message all across your online presence. Your web site, although good, may be static. Use membership sites like Facebook and Twitter because marketing is all about building relationships. You can be active in real time on all these Internet sites. Treat your marketing as one cohesive package—newsletter, blog, web site, Facebook—these tools project your message and your net becomes much wider.

Use email strategically and be careful what you write. Use it to entice people to your sites. Keep it personal, respectful, and thoughtful.

Alyson closed by urging artists to find their voices, in both marketing and in their art. “Be remarkable and stand out.” What drives everything in the marketplace is new ideas. Experiment, try, fail, try again, and stay tough!

## Jury Process panel discussion

Notes by Carolyn Lee Vehslage

This year the jurors for *Quilt National* were Sue Benner, art quilter, teacher, lecturer and seven times a *Quilt National* finalist; Katie Pasquini Masopust, award-winning self-taught fiber artist, author, teacher, and past president of SAQA; and Ned Wert, Professor Emeritus of Art from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and internationally known abstract painter. This combination of talent and experience provided a lively discussion of the jury process for *Quilt National*.

The panel began by closely reviewing the *Quilt National* mission statement: “The jurors will select works that represent unique approaches to the medium and demonstrate the breadth and diversity of contemporary expressions.” It was emphasized throughout the discussion that visual impact was the single most important criteria in the selection process. *Quilt National* is looking for new work with new ideas, unique approaches, and innovation. Sue discussed the issue



Gwyned Trefethen and Sandy Gregg chillaxin’.

of scale. *Quilt National* usually wants larger work. They wanted to see “knock-me-over” work.

The jury process began with the three jurors silently viewing the over 1200 entries for 3 seconds each in random order. This took over 2 hours. They were given no information about the works. Then came a second viewing of each piece for five seconds and included the close-up shots. During this viewing, the jurors gave each piece a score from 1 to 4, with a 1 meaning they did not want to see the image again, and 4 meaning they definitely wanted to see it again. Then they had a third round of 10 seconds each.

The fourth round allowed discussion for the first time. The jurors could inquire about the title, size, and description, but still no artist names. The jurors all emphasized how important it was to have a very detailed description of the piece, not only listing materials but also techniques. These descriptions played an important part in the selection process, especially at the end when pieces were in close competition. Katie held up an entry form and emphasized how important it is to complete the form as carefully and thoroughly as possible. Work can be declined if the descriptions are not accurate. Feel free to call the venue and ask questions if

you are unclear about anything.

Many submitted three pieces (the limit), giving these artists three chances to be viewed by the judges. The judges have to discern whether the work is an evolving style or if the artist is just in a rut, making repetitive work. They cautioned artists to be wary of following trends, which can quickly become fads. It’s important to experiment and learn new techniques, but it’s always best to work from your own core and proceed on your own distinctive path.

Another huge issue was photography. The jurors still saw photos with fingers holding up the quilts or non-uniform backgrounds. They advised that when entering such a large and competitive jury process, it pays to get a professional photographer to take the proper images with the correct background, lighting, sizes of images, and details. They discussed an all-black piece that, if photographed in the usual way, would probably not have been considered at all. But the professional photo was able to show the work to its best advantage and communicate what the piece was about. The majority of poorly photographed images did not make the cut. Katie suggested that once you have the images on a disk, you should view the images on different computers to make sure everything is working properly before sending it.

A final issue discussed was the research that goes into each piece considered for *Quilt National*. It is crucial that work entered not be published elsewhere, including web sites, blogs, reviews, magazines, or SAQA's *Portfolio*. If the *QN* director found it on the Internet, it was disqualified. Alternates are picked to be ready in case this happens.

Visual impact is still the most important criteria. Be able to convey your work in photographs and to communicate it verbally. Sue ended by urging all artists to keep putting themselves out there, creating great work, creating large work, and to keep entering shows.

### What's next?

Panel discussion with **Therese May**, **Dominie Nash**, **Robin Schwalb**, and **Sally Sellers**; **Susan Shie**, Moderator

Notes by *Jeanne Marklin*

The artists who participated in this panel discussion are all mid-career artists. They each spoke for about 10 minutes and showed digital images of their work. The theme, *What's Next*, referred to where each artist would be going with her work in the future. It was interesting to hear what they had learned over the years as well as their artistic struggles.

**Therese May** ([www.theresemay.com](http://www.theresemay.com)) gave advice on remaining positive and honoring your creative truth. She shared a story about trusting the process. She had made an early quilt using her grandmother's old clothes, and 30 years later it was recognized as one of the *100 Best Quilts*. Therese's advice: collaborate with others, live in the present, stay centered, take one step at a time, focus, stay organized, share, and appreciate what you have and what you are doing.

**Dominie Nash** ([www.dominienash.com](http://www.dominienash.com)) related her "Lessons I Have Learned – and Have Yet to Learn." She realized that she has to go to the studio every day; she can't let other things get in the way. Other lessons

included: Mistakes can lead to interesting things, don't hesitate to chop up your old work and make it into something new, don't keep repeating yourself – even if a series is successful. If you feel you are finished with it, move on to something new.

Dominie advised riding out discouragement and to keep on working. Learn how to throw away bad work instead of giving it to someone. (There was a good deal of audience laughter and agreement here.) Try new directions even if failure is possible. Put rejection into perspective. Don't apologize and don't rest on your laurels—start over again. Figure out how to describe yourself in a short paragraph. Don't say yes to outside requests when you would rather be focusing on your work. Make friends with artists who work in other mediums.

**Robin Schwalb** spoke of how much her identity had been linked to her career as a projectionist at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, a position she held until 2007. She now does digital work, making videos, and archiving media for the Met. Working there influenced her vision and, because she works full time, the type of work she is able to

do. Since she was often in the projection room for hours, she had the ability to do handwork. Once her job changed, she needed to change the way she worked too.

**Sally Sellers** ([www.sallysellers.com](http://www.sallysellers.com)) talked about changing her style and the difficulties involved. "I'm in mid-morph here." Sally had been very successful with her house pieces. She has begun beading on hand-dyed fabrics, sometimes using just beads to make lines. She said, "Making art is as important as the finished product. Making art is what saves my life. Art is a way of making sense of the world." Sally recommended that we push ourselves beyond our comfort zones. "My task now is to see how far I can push beads as a line, and that's enough for me."

**Susan Shie** ([www.turtlemoon.com](http://www.turtlemoon.com)) was influenced by Miriam Shapiro and other feminists to express herself through her art. She has changed her working method from hand-stitching her painted work to writing on her work with an air pen. It came about in part because her fingertips had become numb. Susan had been thinking that she enjoyed painting most

Continued on next page



Peg Keeney, Lisa Chipetine, Linda Colsh, Jeanne Marklin and Alison Schwabe on their way to the closing barbecue picnic.

of all, and learning to use the air pen reinforced this for her. She is happier working this way and feels her work has benefited from the switch.

## Approaches to Critiquing Quilt Art

with Sandra Sider

Notes by Peg Keeney and Susan Siefkin

Sandra began the session by talking about the basic principles of design: texture, line, mass, and color, with the secondary principles of repetition, balance, contrast, and focus. She asked each artist to make a brief statement about their work. Sandra made some general comments about the quilt, then opened the discussion to the rest of the participants. Each artist left with some ideas about improvements or some new ideas to consider.

Sandra said that if possible, it is more helpful to engage in critique before your piece is completed so that you can not only learn but also have an opportunity to make revisions. There is no one right answer. Critique is a process of exploring and weighing options. It is possible to offer critique in an affirming and supportive way that invites engagement rather than resistance.

## Digital Designing with Layers

with Deb Cashatt and Kris Sazaki, the Pixeladies

[www.pixeladies.com](http://www.pixeladies.com)

Notes by Mary B. Pal

Deb and Kris gave a lively and humorous presentation on using layers in Photoshop® Elements. They demonstrated the layers palette and walked participants through a project.

To illustrate the basic concept of layers, Deb made one layer with a paper doll. Then she added layers with a shirt, skirt, leggings, and a hat. If you were to create one “flattened” image with all those elements, you couldn’t change just one. But with layers, after your doll is dressed, you can go back and add leggings under the skirt just by shifting the layers. The illustration was enlightening and opened the door to the rest of their demonstration, which included types of layers, creating layers, manipulating layers, layer styles, filters, dragging and dropping, adjustments, and grouping and framing.

They illustrated these basic concepts by creating wonderful in situ designs from photos of colorful Viennese columns, and then provided each participant with a sample

printed on silk charmeuse. This is one of the services they provide to clients: creating custom fabric from anything you can design in Photoshop. Or, if you’re still stuck, they can design an overall pattern for you based on your photograph and print it on a variety of fabrics.

Most of the participants left with confidence to begin experimenting with layers in their design work.

## Preparing Digital Images for Print Quality and Exhibition Entries

with Pat Gould

Notes by Deborah Fell and Deborah Bein

This workshop focused on using Paint Shop Pro® and Photoshop® Elements. Patricia gave a PowerPoint® presentation along with a comprehensive handout.

Patricia covered digital terms and procedures, photo editing software, sharpening, how to crop and resize images, and file formats and sizes. It was an interesting and in-depth beginning to the world of digital photography.

## Pricing, Sales, and Commissions

with Carol Taylor

Notes by Bunnie Jordan

Carol presented an informative workshop on pricing and selling art quilts. She had surveyed 70 artists, and from the 56 respondents she put together a picture of the market from 2001-2008. The presentation included individual artist comments accompanied by images of their work and selling prices, as well as an overview with graphs, charts, and percentages. All of the artists acknowledged difficulty in pricing their work, citing factors such as the general economy, competition with peers, and personal value of the piece, including conflicting desires about selling some work.

Many artists price by measurement, whether by square foot or square

Conference attendees viewing Ruth De Vos' works for sale.



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# Synthesis visits Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia

by Regina Marzlin

The newly designed Cape Breton Centre for Craft and Design on the northernmost tip of Nova Scotia, Canada, has a well-lit, open gallery space with a big storefront window. The gallery is integrated into the retail space. There are two available walls for exhibiting pieces, one of which is curved and gives the space a nice feeling of flow. The small format chosen for this particular SAQA exhibition was well suited to the space.

*Synthesis* is composed of 21 pieces from 18 Canadian SAQA artists. The show opened in March 2009 and traveled to the Rossignol Cultural Centre Liverpool, Nova Scotia, in June and July. Its final exhibition will be at Quilt Canada, the Canadian Quilters Association conference, in Calgary, Alberta, in May 2010.

It was intriguing to see the different approaches to a multifaceted theme. One popular choice of interpretation was the concept of photosynthesis, so references to plant life were a recurring theme. In particular, Elaine Quehl's *Hostas* was outstanding with its dramatic use of green color on a black background. Mary Cope's almost textbook-like depiction of chloroplasts in *Light and Life* reminded me of the subcellular processes in green plants that provide the basic energy for life, as did Anna Hergert's *Algal Bloom*, with transparent and shimmering fabrics in overlapping open oval shapes. Anni Hunt's *Threads of Life 2* depicted RNA replication to remind us of the constant synthesis that takes place in living organisms. Her expressive hand stitching and gentle color variegations created a beautiful surface.

Other artists explored the concept of a synthesis among various materials. Barbara J. West celebrated the interplay of paint and stitch in her two pieces, *Synthesis: Paint and Stitch 2* and *Synthesis: Paint and Stitch 3*,

outlining bold brushstrokes of primary colors on black with stitching, or combining layers of different painted fabrics and papers with stitch. Karen Goetzinger's thoughtful *Reflections at Day's End 14* integrated a 16x16-inch painted canvas as part of a quilted piece. Sylvia Naylor's two impressive pieces *Urban Decay* and *Field Fragments* presented a fusion of paper and fabric, layered and painted, and held together with big loopy hand stitches or free-motion machine stitching to evoke fading and memories of the past.

Laurie Swim assembled a variety of different fabrics, as well as loose fibers and threads felted together, in the painterly *Raw Beauty*, evoking a tranquil landscape in luminous colors. In another successful visualization of synthesis, Mary Pal's *Composure 2* juxtaposed textiles with different tactile qualities—silk, burlap, organza, and cheesecloth—to create a harmonious composition.

Another interesting approach incorporated photos taken and

transferred in various ways. Both Kate Madeloso's *Play it Again, Sam* and Kathryn Botsford's *Echoes on the Shore 1* successfully incorporated different angles, sizes, and scales to transform images into something mysterious and new.

A unique and quirky interpretation of the theme was provided by Pamela Allen. Her *Anniversary Couple II* showed a perfect synthesis of husband and wife in marriage, the couple conjoined in a cubist and colorful style.

The overall impression of the exhibition was one of pushing the boundaries of the concept of a quilt. Some selections did not quite fit the given theme but were intriguing nevertheless. The high quality of the artwork shown made visiting this exhibition a special experience. ▼

SAQA active member Regina Marzlin is a quilt artist living in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Canada. Her web site is [www.reginamarzlin.com](http://www.reginamarzlin.com).



*Echoes On The Shore 1*  
16" x 16"

©2008 Kathryn Botsford

# Marketing and the artist

by Jean M. Judd

**H**ow do you market yourself as a quilt artist? What follows is taken from part of my script for the November 2008 Mentorship Forum conference call that you can listen to on SAQA-U.

These are the ways I've started to market myself as an artist. Most of these activities have happened in the last three years. My goal is to promote the art quilt as art and myself as an artist. I want to do commission work as well as sell some of the artwork that I design strictly for myself.

I subscribe to *Quilters Newsletter Magazine*, *Quilting Arts*, *Quilters World*, *Professional Quilter*, *Crafts Report*, *Craftrends*, *ARTnews*, and *ArtCalendar* magazines. I also receive journals from organizations I'm a member of, such as the *SAQA Journal* and the *American Craft* magazine from the American Craft Council. This may seem like a lot of subscriptions, but each has a very definite place in my library and my growth as a professional art quilter. I spend about 30 minutes to an hour each night reading to keep up with what's happening in the traditional and contemporary quilt worlds and the art world in general.

I find great marketing ideas, and it's

good to see what other artists in different mediums are doing to promote themselves and their artwork. These artists are finding success no matter what medium they are working in.

I joined national quilting organizations so I could read the journals, enter shows, and gain expertise from the members themselves. I joined the American Quilter's Society in 1999, American Craft Council and the National Quilting Association in 2005, SAQA and the International Quilt Association in 2006. I have belonged to my local guild, Mixed Sampler Quilt Guild, since 1996.

I've purchased many books on quilting for profit, marketing artwork, making commissions for affluent people, and getting public art commissions. In particular, I have multiple books by Sylvia Ann Landman and Barbara Wright Sykes, where I have found useful information on how to price my artwork. See the sidebar for a list of some of the books that have helped me with general art business knowledge.

In January of 2005 I signed onto the gallery site Yessy ([www.yessy.com](http://www.yessy.com)) for \$59 a year. It's a great site for artists just starting out and/or wanting Internet exposure inexpensively.

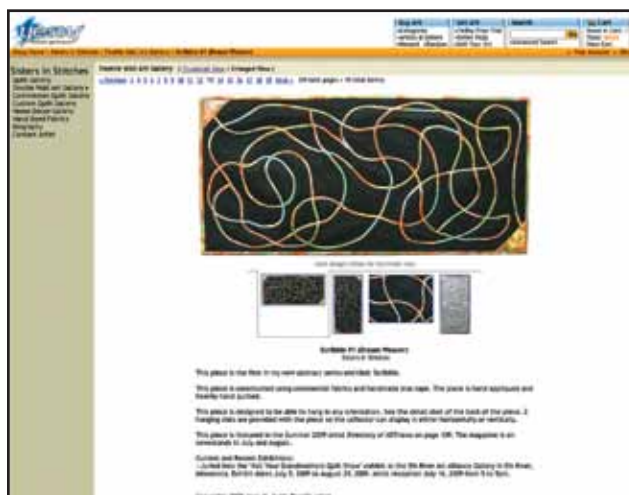
Artwork is divided into categories. When I joined, there was no textile category, so I requested one and it was put up within a week.

Yessy offers an unlimited amount of space to display artwork. I have setup multiple galleries under my main gallery ([www.yessy.com/sistersinstitches](http://www.yessy.com/sistersinstitches)). Yes, there's an "e" missing in the title, but there was a limited amount of space and this was my business name. I have the option to list items as "Coming Soon," "For Sale," "Sold," or "Not for Sale." I put up my own images, text, and pricing. The site takes care of the credit card processing and makes sure checks don't bounce prior to fulfilling the order. Their fee is 10%. The artwork is shipped directly to the clients when the payment has cleared. This site was my only web presence for three years.

After seeing that *ArtCalendar* magazine was starting a new studio series, I contacted the editor, Carolyn Proeber, in January 2007 offering an article on my upcoming studio renovation. Carolyn was excited about the idea and gave me the go-ahead for an article when the project finished in June or July. I thought this would be a great venue for promoting myself as an artist.

I have always found 4 or 5 articles with good, sound business information in *ArtCalendar* magazine. The gallery owners, interior designers, and collectors who are interviewed are the cream of the crop. The more I can get my name out into the public eye through magazines, the better chance I have in selling some of my artwork or obtaining new commissions. It seemed like a great way to capture the attention of a large audience, and it didn't cost me anything outside of postage to send in the article and images on a CD.

Around the same time, I blindly



Screen from Jean M. Judd's Yessy gallery featuring her quilt *Scribble #1* (*Dream Weaver*)

## Resources

**Sew up a Storm: All the Way to the Bank** – Karen L. Maslowski

**The Business of Sewing** – Barbara Wright Sykes

**The Art of Selling to the Affluent** – Matt Oechsli

**The Artist-Gallery Partnership** – Tad Crawford & Susan Mellon

**Basic Guide to Selling Crafts on the Internet** – James Dillehay

**Crafting for Dollars** – Sylvia Landman

**Make Money Quilting** – Sylvia Landman

**Quilting for Fun & Profit** – Sylvia Landman (Barbara Brabec, Editor)

**Make Your Quilting Pay for Itself** – Sylvia Ann Landman

**Beyond Success: 15 Secrets to Effective Leadership & Life Based on Legendary Coach John Wooden's Pyramid of Success** – Brian D Biro

**Pricing Without Fear: A Sewing Entrepreneurs Guide** – Barbara Wright Sykes

**Do You Sew for Profit? A Guide for Wholesale, Retail & Consignment** – Barbara Wright Sykes

**The Artist's Guide to Public Art** – Lynn Basa

**Graphic Artists Guild Handbook Pricing & Ethical Guidelines** (12th Edition)

submitted the same article to *Professional Quilter* magazine to see if I could get it published there. I was fortunate that the day the packet was received at *Professional Quilter*, editor Morna Golletz needed a filler article for the Fall 2007 issue. Morna called me and said it was a great article, and it could be published with minimal editing on her part. She asked me to write a list of tips and take a detail photo of the cassette case I had reused for storing notions and thread. I did a quick writeup in 15 minutes: "7 tips for Your Studio." The article was sent to the printer the next day.

I also had a half-page spot in the *Crafts Report* magazine feature "Insight." I used my *Choir of Angels* as the accompanying image, and I wrote about how I received commissions. It didn't cost me anything to be included in this feature besides filling out an online survey. My SAQA regional representative, Clairan Ferrono, has also been featured in this magazine.

I signed up for the Artist Online Listing service on the *Crafts Report* web site. This service allowed me to post two images and to list exhibitions where my artwork could be seen. I was able to change the list of exhibitions as necessary, but the images had to remain the same for the year. The annual fee is \$95.

Wanting to promote my work as "art," I designed and sent in an ad for the Artist Directory of the Summer 2007 edition of *ARTnews* magazine. There are two editions each year that include this directory, and the Summer edition is on the newsstand for two months. This edition

features the top 200 art collectors in the world, so it seemed like a perfect advertising opportunity. This ad is my most expensive advertising, \$500 per ad, but I feel it is well worth the expense, because I'm the only textile artist who has been included in the directory since I started receiving the magazine. I've been in the last two Summer editions, and I will be in the upcoming December edition as well.

I have also been doing an ad in the back of the *Midwest Art Fair* Spring and Fall show issues. This ad costs \$100 for the two issues, and I receive a free copy of the publication. This ad resulted in three interior designers contacting me to request my portfolio. I've received one commission from that contact so far.

After reading articles about percent-for-art projects in *Art Calendar* and *ARTnews*, I decided to start signing up for artist registries. These registries are used by architects, interior designers, city planners, and others for filling public buildings with art. Being on these registries has put me on mailing lists for calls for artists for public projects.

I submitted artwork for the following programs in November of 2007: Chicago Public Art Program, Austin, Texas Public Art Program, Miami Beach Public Art Program, New York City Public Art Program, Miami-Dade Public Art Program, Wisconsin Public Art Program, and the Minnesota Public Art Program. Some could be done online; for others I had to mail in a CD along with my résumé. Each one has a different set of requirements, and most require that I update my information every 3-4 years.

In early 2008 I submitted to a few more registries in Washington, Florida, Las Vegas, Ohio, and Georgia. I also am now listed on the Call for Entry site (CAFÉ), [www.callforentry.org](http://www.callforentry.org). Interior designers, architects, contractors, city planners, and others can check and see what I'm doing and what other public art projects I've received. There is no cost to me.

In 2008, I continued to increase my online presence. I signed up for the [Artscuttlebutt.com](http://Artscuttlebutt.com) site when it went online early in the year. Sponsored by *Art Calendar* magazine, it's free for subscribers. It is a place to post your artwork. Currently, they select one artist from the [Artscuttlebutt](http://Artscuttlebutt.com) site for a one-page feature in *Art Calendar* magazine each month.

*Art Calendar* has also launched a companion site, [Crafters Circle](http://CraftersCircle.com), which is free to subscribers. I have posted a few images there. The more places my artwork shows up on the Internet, the more opportunity I have for clients to find my artwork and purchase it or to commission a piece.

In May 2008, I designed and built my own web site using [www.startlogic.com](http://www.startlogic.com). It was very easy to do myself, even though I am not a computer wizard by any stretch of the imagination. I had over 150 pages of templates to select from. I added pages, my own images, PDF files, and text. It came with a store function for processing sales using PayPal™. It took me a week to get a bare-bones site up and running, and my fees were less than \$250.

I have submitted an ad promoting my hand-dyed fabrics to run in the

See "Marketing" on page 32

# Acquiring your own voice

by June O. Underwood

Like any advice, this article comes with a warning: “Your mileage may vary.” By definition, developing your own style or personal voice cannot proceed with set rules. It can only follow from tips, intuition, serendipitous accidents, and much work.

Following one of my own tips, I am going to leap over the edge, follow my nose, throw caution to the wind, and give advice. Most of the advice, you might note, is not exactly new, either in meaning or wording.

I distinguish between “style,” which is something that can easily be recognized by viewers of art, and “voice,” which can be recognized first by the maker, and perhaps later by viewers. “Style” is what gallery owners look for (as long as it is a style that sells). “Voice” is what the artist recognizes as her own, and it may or may not be what curators and viewers will be drawn to.

Acquiring a voice includes catching hold of and being able to develop that part of the self that is your own, that allows you to sing, holler, whisper, and chant, and still sound like yourself. These five tips for acquiring a personal voice have really helped me.

**1. Spend time in the water.** This is basic: You cannot swim the Channel unless you have swum the pool. A professor of mine once said we should go into the studio at least once a day, if only to vacuum. You cannot win the lottery if you do not buy a ticket. You cannot find a voice if you do not speak.

Workshops count as time in the water, but only if you do as the instructor says and not as she does. Workshops are special training sessions—great for tips and techniques, but not to be used for imitation. Imitating your instructor only prompts you to make your teacher’s sounds; it doesn’t develop your own voice.

Once in a while, jump off a cliff

into the water, even if you cannot swim. Do the thing that you know is outrageous. Choose the technique that you dislike the most, fling fabrics at your design wall, and make use of those that land in the bullseye. Take a workshop with the person you most dread. Then take one with the person whose work you most admire.

**2. Pick your battles.** Work to your strengths, fight your weaknesses, and accept competency where you are not interested in any greater achievement. I accept this in my sewing skills. I am content with competency and now that I have achieved it, I am not interested in becoming a better seamstress. But my drawing skills are essential to the kind of work I need to do, and I am seriously challenged in my drawing ability. Since I’m always striving to draw better, I spend time in the drawing pool, even when I get nosefuls of chlorine.

**3. Think.** Think exaggeratedly, ridiculously, and imaginatively. Think while doing dishes or scrubbing the garden furniture, just before sleeping, or when you are with your friends. Much of what is evolving as your own voice is already there to some degree: peculiarities of stitching or insights into weird and wonderful fabric combinations. But sometimes, the stuck point appears and will not go away. Dithering starts, despair sets in. Indifferent application of disparate, unlike, and wild materials begin to appear willy-nilly. At this point, it’s time to ask, “What am I trying to say, and in what tone of voice do I need to say it?” Screaming at a child with an “owie” is generally not effective, but murmuring soothingly when the kid is about to run in front of a truck won’t do, either.

Ask the hard questions, best asked of friends who are both kind and critical, who can see clearly but would never give advice unless asked. You

can sometimes sneak in these questions to yourself as you work, and they’ll help you at that moment when you want to throw a spool of thread at your design wall. Thought and intuition sit along a continuum, and it is hard to tell where thought leaves off and intuition begins. When things are going badly, try playing along the entire line, from sheer thoughtless grabbing of fabrics to careful consideration of precisely what it is you are attempting.

Other hard questions to consider: Is what you’re doing worth it? Are you creating something that is different, goes beyond, sits well beside, and/or perks up that which you are working from? If you’re making a Georgia O’Keeffe iris, will it be a pale version (regardless of how vivid the colors) of the O’Keeffe, and of the iris plant in your garden, or will it change the way we see and love O’Keeffe and irises in general?

What “thought” can do is produce art that comes out of greater depths of your diaphragm. It can produce new ways of looking that lead to new ways of making art. It can pull you through the rough places in your art making. Sometimes the “thought” is unspoken, and most of the time, making art comes out of the depths of the unspoken. But there are times when only thinking out loud to yourself will get you out of the muck that makes you gurgle rather than sing.

**4. Trust the process.** Yes, you have to work. Yes, you have to despair. Yes, you have to make three Nancy Crow pieces before you realize that you’ve done three pieces that look like Nancy Crow, only not so good. Yes, you have to spend more time than you want, and more time than most pieces deserve, and more time in the water than is good for your delicate skin. It might even toughen you up and make you less itchy when



“Miocene” is a geologic term denoting a time period about 20 million years ago. The Miocene epoch saw the creation of ice at the poles, marking the beginning of our current planetary conditions. We may be seeing the end of these conditions with climate change. *Miocene* is about the unimaginable age and power of the earth on which we humans are mere trifles, less than ants. The earth, at whatever age, has a power that is both beautiful and terrifying. The photos show the evolution of *Miocene* from the original dyed silk fabric through two early stages of design.

the time gets longer than you would like. But if you want to find your own voice, trust that you will find it if you work, and think, and pick your battles.

**5. Play.** This means different activities to different people. Painting from photographs is, for me, play. Or making color charts with paint or dye. But going to a movie, sliding down a sliding board, dancing all night, or singing karaoke could also be the right play. Playtime allows seeds to germinate, your voice to rest a bit, and your tone to recover its timbre. It will not necessarily help you find your voice, but it will help you persevere in trusting the process.

Now, note that most of the advice I have given here has been given in clichés. I prefer to call them truisms, old truths that have been around so long we scarcely hear them anymore. Why should I strive to say differently what others have said so well before? I hope that it will be easier for you, my fellow visual artists, to remember “Trust the Process,” “Time in the Water,” “Pick your Battles,” “Think,” and “Play” more readily than any set of compound, complex phrases I could use.

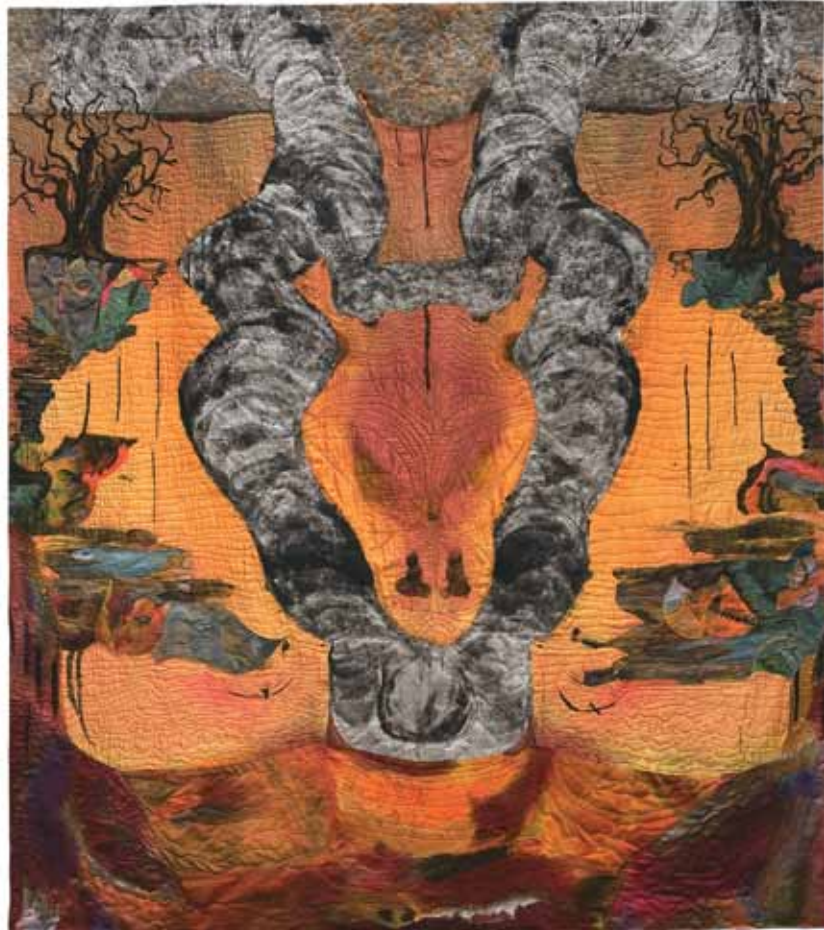
We each have a voice that is recognizable to those who know us. What we develop in art is a voice that has been greatly enhanced by working at it, by playing with it, by thinking about it, and by trusting that it is ours. We have to trust the process and know

that one day, everyone, not just your mother, will say “I recognized that as your voice the moment I saw it.” ▼

*SAQA professional artist member June O. Underwood is a painter and textile artist living in Portland, Oregon. Her web site is [www.juneunderwood.com](http://www.juneunderwood.com).*

***Miocene***  
92" x 82"

©2006 June O. Underwood



## Featured artist

# Jo Fitsell

by Deidre Adams

**A**rtist and teacher Jo Fitsell uses her art as a process of self-discovery. She says “the practice of making art helps me to transcend everyday thoughts, to get away from myself and the rattling of my analytical brain, and to be with this invisible teacher and warm friend.” Art is the teacher, and she, the student.

Fitsell was born in a small town in Ontario, Canada, and moved to Colorado when she was in her 20s, where she remained for many years raising a family and teaching preschool and elementary school children. She still feels a strong connection with her roots and family in Canada and now tries to divide her time between Canada and Colorado.

As a preschool teacher, watching the children make art was a consequential experience for her. She says, “I could say that art happened to me. I was teaching in an open classroom and noticed how natural it was for children to gravitate to the area of



*“I want to express the invisible by making it tactile, translating what I sense into pieces that can be felt as well as seen. I succeed when my work resonates with an internal rhythm and allows me to come to an understanding about what it is I am creating.”*

the classroom that most interested them: building with blocks or sculpting with clay, painting, or drawing. Watching them, I began to trust that I would gravitate to the area I most

needed to learn from.” She observed that kids have a special freedom in their approach to art-making, and she realized that she longed to rediscover this freedom within herself.

Fitsell only began to really think of herself as a creative person in her late 30s. It was a pivotal time in her life. “While I was teaching preschool, I found I was teaching myself how to be an artist. I asked myself, ‘What have I really done that has value?’ I decided it was working with kids and art, and I committed myself to doing those two things.” For Fitsell, creating art and teaching art are completely intertwined.

A self-taught artist, Fitsell arrived at the practice of art through the route of traditional quilting. Her first quilt, a red-and-white Irish Chain, was the beginning of her journey. She says the experience of discovering the art world made her feel a bit like Alice in



*Return to Earth, 44" x 60" ©2007*



Left: *The Visitor*, 28" x 17" ©2004

Below: *Self-Portrait*, 25" x 24" ©2006



Wonderland, with quilts taking on the role of the White Rabbit. "I had never seen a rabbit in a waistcoat, so I followed him and down the hole I went."

It wasn't long before traditional quilting gave way to designing her own fabrics with dyes and batik. She was drawn to the arts and wanted to explore self-expression, but with no formal art training, she was unsure of how to proceed. She recalls, "I didn't know where subject matter and ideas came from." But she did have a friend who was an artist. "I asked her to show me how to be an artist. She took me to her studio and, surprisingly enough, shared her journal with me. Then she showed me the work she created out of her writing."

Inspired by this friend and mentor, Fittell realized that she could take this knowledge about creativity and combine it with her own background to form a personal body of work. With

her background in psychology, she was especially interested in personality models and elements of Jungian psychology, psyche, symbols, and everlasting stories.

At first, Fittell was not aware that her work was explicitly autobiographical. The first time she realized that she was expressing her feelings was while working on a piece that was ostensibly about burial cloths from Hmong Dynasty, which involved a lot of black fabric. She had recently gone through a divorce after ten years of marriage. "I suddenly realized there were ten blocks in the piece, and I caught on to what I was doing. I was putting my emotions into the work and it became a divorce quilt. I called it *Ten Years Later*."

She followed this with more work exploring the idea of social/emotional contracts that are handed down from one generation to the next, and how these invisible contracts imprint

on a child's life. She says, "My early pieces were rooted in the landscapes of my childhood. They explored the importance of place and time within a culture and how it is reflected in the body memory of a child." As she worked on these pieces, she discovered, "I have a special relationship with my art — it's about me trying to figure out what's going on with me, in the deepest part of myself."

Through traditional quilting groups, Fittell became involved with other artists working in quilts and fiber who felt that their needs were not being met by those groups. These women realized that they needed their own forum "where our work would be cherished and accepted." In 1987, they co-founded Front Range Contemporary Quilters, an organization whose primary goal was education about the merging mediums of art quilts and fiber arts. Fittell recalls,

Continued on next page



“Over the years, we taught ourselves many new techniques and shared everything we learned with enthusiasm, liked cherished recipes or fine wine.” They began to organize small shows: one at a bank, then a church, then an art gallery. Twenty years later, FRCQ is a thriving organization with over 200 members and a couple of large exhibitions every year.

Fitsell’s current work follows two distinct pathways. One continues her exploration of conceptual ideas with mixed media and collage. The pieces are narrative in form and center around the changing ideals of women’s roles in society since the late 1800s. The work is about women’s sense of themselves, their secret hopes and dreams, their values and internal strength, and about passing these ideals on to future generations. Fitsell feels a strong connection to the women who came before, her ancestors. “I feel their presence and camaraderie while I’m working, and I visualize them watching me to see how far I get.” She uses images of historical women that she finds in books and combines these with other collage elements of paper and fabric.

Another important aspect of Fitsell’s work comes through her deep spiritual connection to Nature. For several years, she took regular multi-day trips to stay and work at a ranger’s cabin in Colorado’s San Luis

valley. The cabin had no electricity, so she concentrated on painting. “Being in isolation, I was learning how to love the land and I felt connected. It was as though the land would reclaim me as one of its own, and I felt the

Above: **Hidden Order**  
(detail)

Below: **Hidden Order**  
60” x 47” ©2006





love coming back to me.”

This connection with the earth was also revealed to her when she went back to Canada for an extended visit. “It’s so different from out here in the West where everything is dry. In Canada in the fall, when you step on the grass, it’s all soupy and wet, and I think of the decay and of things going back to the earth, of the nourishment this provides for the next cycle of life.” This idea is expressed in her recent quilts.

While Fittsell’s mixed-media collage work represents an analytical side of her personality in which she’s conscious of doing conceptual, representational work, her quilts reflect a freer way of working, guided by intuition and an inner sense of being, “like an altered state, where it’s all done through the senses.” She works on three or four pieces at a time, first creating the fabric for all of them. Her fabrics are a complex layering of multiple surface design techniques, including dyeing with wax and acrylic resist, marbling, and painting. All the while, she has an inner sense of trying to match the work to an unnamable “something inside,” feeling an awareness of a concept and striving to express it.

In addition to creating her own work, Fittsell continues to teach art to both children and adults. She enjoys collaborating with young people in creating art for public spaces. These have included a wall hanging for the Denver District Attorney’s office, props and backdrops for theater performances, collage murals for public school buildings, and a mixed media art project for The Children’s Hospital.

Her teaching for adults includes classes on marbling, dyeing and collage. But Fittsell says, “My favorite classes are not technique classes, but those in which I teach how to learn from your own work and develop your own techniques and personal voice. These are thrilling classes for me to teach. Watching students of all ages find that precious place inside them where creativity rests and waits, coaxing forth new ideas, is the best reward for me.” ▼

*Jo Fittsell’s web site is [www.jofittsell.com](http://www.jofittsell.com).*

*SAQA professional artist member Deidre Adams is a painter, photographer, and mixed media fiber artist living in Littleton, Colorado. Her web site is [www.deidreadams.com](http://www.deidreadams.com).*



Above: **Balance** 47" x 24" ©2007

Below: **Remedy** 19" x 47" ©2008



## Critique principles in the *Musings* jury process

by Sandra Sider

**A**s sole juror of the SAQA *Musings* exhibition, my first goal was to select quilts that clearly had enough visual interest and sophistication to qualify for a SAQA exhibition, with no thought of how they might work together in the room where the show would be installed. I based my choices on the critique principles discussed below. Secondly, I considered whether each quilt that made the first cut expressed some aspect of the “musings” theme. The final choice focused on whether the quilts would create a balanced, coherent exhibition. This essay addresses the principles used for the preliminary selection, with a few remarks about the thematic subject.

For my critique workshops, I have fine-tuned basic design principles to apply to contemporary quilt art. Each piece initially selected for *Musings* had to incorporate successfully at least two of the primary principles: texture (physical and visual), color, line, or mass; and at least two of

the secondary principles: balance, focus, contrast, or repetition with variation. The three quilts discussed in this essay demonstrate that the artists who made them were applying virtually all the principles of great quilt design. These particular quilts are included here because they also demonstrate the range of stylistic approaches in the exhibition.

In *Handwork*, Mary Diamond created a peaceful, cozy, indoor space where the viewer might muse upon the wintry landscape seen through a mullioned window. She places us in a season when handwork is typically done, with evidence of workers’ hands in ceramic jugs on a table and in rough-hewn logs comprising the wall. When I first saw the image of this quilt, I was struck immediately by the vibrant mass of contrasting colors produced by reddish-brown jugs against a cool blue table, and by the subtle patterning of these hues on the wall. Stitching, mullions, and a sawhorse seen through the window

emphasize the natural linear structure of the logs. By silhouetting the jagged ends of the logs against a black border, Diamond draws our attention to their black interstices. Because these dark lines recede visually, the somewhat lighter logs push forward as a monumental structure.

The composition of *Handwork* is unified by color, with dual focal points of a tabletop in the foreground and a landscape in the background. Visual and physical texture in the interior wooden wall balance these design elements. Because *Handwork* is meant to be a pictorial work of art, the composition had to conform to a logical depiction of space and depth. Except for the edge of the table, where a piece of fabric seems suspended in space, Diamond indeed positioned objects solidly on the table and put the distant house in proper perspective. Volumetric characteristics of dishes and jugs are indicated by shadows in the foreground, and by reflections along the surfaces facing the window.

Part of the genius of this piece is that a cozy domestic scene is suggested without any sentimentality. Adhering to a predominantly cool palette, the artist maintains a serene yet serious ambiance. In addition, the white clarity of the landscape illuminates the interior, bringing everything into sharp focus. Within that landscape, Diamond uses a diagonal thrust of images across the window from upper right to lower left, a bold stroke that returns our eyes to the horizontal display of objects on the table. *Handwork* is a quilt to savor.

Tracy McCabe Stewart referenced a specific type of location in her splendid *Torii Gate*, referring to an architectural structure which functions in Japanese culture as a portal to sacred space. This quilt exemplifies the magic of an effective title, and



*Handwork*, 40" x 60" ©2005 Mary Diamond

## Torii Gate

55" x 60"

©2007 Tracy McCabe Stewart

Stewart's concept is fully realized by the generous scale of *Torii Gate*. In most instances, placing a motif in the center can deaden a painterly composition. Here, however, the blue orb, receding slightly into the background as cool, dark colors tend to do, pulls the viewer through the portal into a shining golden world. Flashes of "light" may symbolize spiritual illumination.

Japanese aesthetics are evident in the striated colors of both panels serving as upright posts. This patterning resembles the multi-colored skies of nineteenth-century Japanese woodcut prints that influenced Art Nouveau artists in Europe, appearing in posters and other publications. Perhaps because of our association of such decorative surfaces with an earlier style, *Torii Gate* has an antique feel, which enhances its aura. The idea of the quilt as an antique object, endows it with the implied presence of previous viewers, who were required to approach such gates with a clean spirit and respectful attitude. These connotations contribute to the visual power of the quilt.

While the side panels contain both warm and cool colors, the top panel features soft, warm tones. This subdued surface contrasts with the brighter center panel—the spiritual space beyond the gate. Stewart physically separates the gate from the center panel by leaving a space between the center and the sides. Thus the realm of the spirit occupies its own discrete space. Returning to the blue orb in the center, we might speculate on its meaning. "Blue orb" is a term referring to the earth, and Stewart seems to be centering it—with "centering" as a metaphysical concept—within spiritual boundaries. Her message in *Torii Gate* is of universal concern, as she reveals an existence beyond consumerism and commodities.

In *Thoughts of Flying*, Eileen Lauterborn's penchant for line and color creates a vibrant, lively surface, without any border to restrict the



flow. Her blue ground in the pictorial space functions like a blue sky or waterfall, with thin lines of pink and light green falling like confetti. Lauterborn's stitching neatly emphasizes this vertical movement. Long, pink hatch marks in the upper section create a dense canopy as pink hums loudly against green, providing

a springboard for fragments spiraling toward the viewer. While the flying fragments can be seen only partially at the top, they pop out from the blue background in the bottom section.

Given the quilt's title, I find the content provocatively ambiguous, in that the composition seems to

Continued on page 36



*Thoughts of Flying*, 42" x 48" ©Eileen Lauterborn

# SAQA member gallery: *Appliqué*



## Suzanne Mouton Riggio

*St. Mary's Visitation School's 150th Anniversary*, 77" x 57" ©2009

In 1998, I had a quilt show at St. Mary's in Elm Grove, Wisconsin. The result was a commission for the 150th anniversary of St. Mary Visitation School due in 2009. Eleven years later, I have finished the grant writing, the research, the drafting, the shopping and the sewing. I used prismatic foil for the stained glass, and the back side lists the names of the graduates.

## Laurie Brainerd

*Election Results*, 33" x 33" ©2009  
[www.lauriebrainerd.typepad.com](http://www.lauriebrainerd.typepad.com)

As Robert Indiana reflected on the "Love" of his time, I reflect upon the "Hope" of our time. The letters spelling "Hope" are hand-appliqued. The piece is machine quilted in a lone-star pattern with letters spelling "CHANGE."



## Leni Levenson Wiener

*Market Day, Sarlat*, 32" x 22" ©2008  
[www.leniwiener.com](http://www.leniwiener.com)

Inspired by a photo taken by a friend while in France, this quilt combines raw-edge machine appliqué with thread painting.





Joan Sowada

*City Mojo*, 30" X 47" ©2008  
avacenter.org

This piece is an example of something both abstract and representational.

Nancy E. Kimpel

*Echinacea Sunrise*  
48" x 34" ©2009

This piece was made for an invitational fiber exhibit at the Olbrich Gardens in Madison, Wisconsin. It was developed from a photo taken in the gardens last summer. The fabric used in the piece was all artist dyed and each petal has threadwork to enhance the look of the flowers. The center of the flowers were hand painted and also include thread-work.



Linda Filby-Fisher

*Origin Celebration Of Life Series*  
74" x 52" ©1999

Created with deep respect for the rhythm of infinity and the many stories of our ancestors.



## To border or not to border

by Elaine Quehl

An issue I have often struggled with when designing my art quilts is whether or not to add borders. Over time, I'm finding myself adding borders with much less frequency. I've observed that most art quilts I admire do not have borders, although occasionally I find myself completely enamored with one that does. I have pored over *Quilt National* catalogs, studying quilts with and without borders, and counting the numbers in each category. While they are certainly in the minority, a few quilts with borders are accepted into this prestigious show.

As a teacher, I have longed for clear guidelines for my students about when to apply borders. This question became particularly urgent for me in the past year, when I launched my

new workshop series, "The Art Quilt." In six-day workshops held over a period of six months, I share with students my process for making an art quilt from beginning to end.

In many other classes I have taught, I observed that students often feel compelled to add borders to their work. This compulsion is likely a habit that students carry over from a traditional quilting background to their art quilts. I also observed that sometimes, adding a border interfered with an otherwise good composition. I could usually identify when the border did not enhance the work, but I didn't seem to have the words to explain why.

In January 2009, I initiated a discussion about borders on the Quiltart list. I was thrilled at the number of responses I received. Everyone seemed to have an opinion, and I felt it would be valuable to share these with the broader community.

Although I occasionally meet quilt artists who feel that borders should never appear on art quilts, virtually all of the artists who participated in the Quiltart discussion think an artist should have the option of bordering an art quilt if it enhances the artwork. Some artists, like Virginia Spiegel, never add borders even though they

believe the option should be available. Delores Hamilton, another artist who is open to the possibility of borders, nevertheless says, "In almost all cases, I can't think of a single reason to add one."

Borders are shunned by some artists because of their association with bed quilts, where they are often used to increase or alter the size to fit a particular bed. Too often borders are added without regard for whether they enhance the existing design.

Quilt artists who reference traditional quilting elements in their work are often inclined to use borders. Such references are an important feature of Sue Reno's artistic vision, and therefore borders figure prominently in her quilts. In the words of June Underwood, "When the artwork references traditional, quilterly work—containing blocks or centered imagery, or even decorative vining—then perhaps the traditional border would not only be appropriate, but important to continue the theme."

Not unexpectedly, many artists who participated in the discussion expressed an aversion to rules. Johnnie Mae Schell says, "For me to define borders and/or bindings as 'dated' or only for bed quilts, just creates walls and boundaries to this exciting quest of art quilts. I want to be ready to throw them off or add them on as the design needs." In making art quilts, Sue Reno considers herself "free from having to adhere to any particular dogma," but "this applies just as much to dogmas that say art quilts cannot have borders or bindings."

I heard over and over again that there is no right or wrong answer to my question, and we should all feel free to use the technique best suited to the design. The majority believe that the quilt should have borders if it needs them. In the words of artist



*Standing Still*, 29" x 21"

©Elaine Quehl

The absence of a border in this work allows the eye to move off the edge of the piece.



**Reach, 50" x 37"**

The border forms a narrow black frame to set off the design within it.

part of the surface of a successful piece of art."

Borders will greatly impact your design, and in the words of Ellen Lindner, "can often be major players in the overall design." Lindner offers tutorials on border considerations on her web site at [www.adventurequilter.com](http://www.adventurequilter.com). Similarly, Lyric Kinard says, "Everything you surround your art with has an impact on the design." Kinard advocates mounting or framing small works to give them more presence and offers tutorials on her web site at

[www.lyrickinard.com](http://www.lyrickinard.com).

The border is an integral part of the overall design, so an integrated approach is called for. "The border must relate to the inner portion of the artwork," says Lindner, "and in no case should the border attract more attention than the interior."

Many artists decide whether a border should be added based on whether the design seems to need containing, or whether they want to create a feeling of expansiveness where the design appears to move off the edges of the artwork.

Cathy Bargar says, "Sometimes a design needs containment, as part of both the artistic and conceptual aspect. Other times, the whole point of a piece is non-containment." When I created my quilt *Standing Still*, I did not believe a border would enhance the work. I now see that this was a good decision, because it successfully creates the impression that the tree continues beyond the edges of the quilt.

Some artists make a distinction between a border and a frame. Betty Busby, for example, often chooses to put a 2-3" solid fabric frame around her work if it needs containing. For

Busby, a frame sets off the main image but does not introduce new design elements. June Underwood makes a similar distinction between border and frame, although she still uses the word "border." "There are times when the border can be made to look like a frame (which in the broadest sense of the word, it is) and therefore take on an unexpected but pleasurable appearance." Busby sees many of my works as framed rather than bordered. Almost all works in my foliage series, for example, feature a darker valued fabric frame around them, which has the effect of setting off the design within them.

Until this discussion, I had always considered bindings separate from borders, but I found that many artists view the impact of a binding as similar to that of a border. A traditional binding, when highly visible or contrasting with the inner design, can contain the work and prevent the eye from moving off the piece, just as a border can. While some feel that traditional bindings now look dated, others feel that decisions relating to binding and facings should be based on design and not what's in or out in the art quilt world.

I realize now that all too often I was making a decision about whether or not to border at the end of the design process. When I did not use a border, it was because the design seemed to stand on its own. Most of the time when I did use a border, I was using it to draw attention to what was inside the border and to set it off, as I've done with pieces in my foliage series.

An integrated approach to borders is called for. It really is all about the design, and any border decision should be considered in the context of the overall intent. ▼

*SAQA professional artist member Elaine Quehl is a teacher, dyer of fabrics, and quilt artist living in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Her web site is [www.equarelle.ca](http://www.equarelle.ca).*

Scott Murkin, "It would seem that leaving a border/frame off a piece of art that needs one is just as much a faux pas as putting one on a piece that doesn't need it."

June Underwood said, "Intentionality really is paramount. We need to know what we intend to convey in the art we make." Reno adds, "I don't think the borders or the binding make my work any less of an art piece, because they are just elements in an overall design and execution that exists to express an idea. It's the intent of the work, not the details of construction, that make it art."

Borders are a design decision, just like any other, rather than an add-on at the end. More importantly, we should put "attention into the basic design first," says Sandy Donabed. "Adding a border has about the same design significance as any decision you make." Alison Schwabe adds, "For this reason, the principles of design and color theory apply here as they do in any other medium. Any edge treatment is totally a design decision, and options need to be considered at the design stage. Regardless of medium, any border, binding, facing, or other treatment is an integral

# Art Gallery in a Box IV

12 artworks + 1 box = a one-of-a-kind collector's masterpiece

by Julie Filatoff

SAQA's fourth "Art Gallery in a Box" showcases 12 quilts made by 13 renowned SAQA members, proudly housed in a handmade table. Each quilt is one foot square, and is stored in its own drawer.

SAQA has created the AGIAB every two years and auctioned it to raise funds. Former SAQA President Katie Pasquini Masopust explained the selection process. "The artists were chosen from the PAM list and recommended by the board; the final choice has been mine for the last three boxes. The artists all donated their work, for which we are very grateful. The box is fantastic, but without their wonderful works, it would just be a box."

Masopust explained that she received several résumés from craftspeople who were interested in creating the box. She chose Todd Ouwehand of Los Angeles, California, for the quality of his craft and his eagerness to work with us.

This year's box/table is crafted of walnut, tamo, zebrawood, and lacewood. It measures 23 inches high and 31 inches along each side of the triangular shape. "While designing the table, I thought and worked like a quilter," said Ouwehand. "I used a rotary cutter, acrylic ruler, and

custom templates to precisely cut the veneer for the top, which is pieced together from twelve triangles that represent the twelve quilts."

Masopust had the pleasure of living with the AGIAB in her home until it was shipped to Athens, Ohio, for the auction, held during SAQA's Art & Excellence Conference. "I got very attached to the box, so the auction was bittersweet for me," she added. Masopust is thankful to Yvonne Porcella for originating the idea. "It truly is a wonderful art piece and a great fundraiser. This year, it raised \$10,000 for SAQA's programs."

The 12 artworks are incredibly varied—in technique, subject matter, and coloration.

Bob Adams of Lafayette, Indiana, submitted *Subdued Interplay Study*. "Subdued Interplay is a series I have been working on for a year or more," said Adams. "All are discharged pieces, with thread providing the only color used. Some have subtle thread colors, and others have more impact. As to what colors are added, it depends on what the piece says to me." *Subdued Interplay Study* is 100% cotton that was discharged (immersed in Thiox) and quilted with WonderFil polyester thread.

Margaret Cusack of Brooklyn, New

York, said that her appliquéd artwork, *Obama*, commemorates "the phenomenal rise of Barack Obama to the presidency. I superstitiously waited until he was elected before I completed the piece so that I wouldn't single-handedly jinx the election." Since 2000, Cusack has created a series of portraits using gold, silver, and other metallic fabrics. "I create a line drawing by breaking down the shapes in the faces into a study of the lights and darks. My 'rough fabric pasteup' is the next step; based on the pattern, I quickly cut out and try different combinations of fabrics in a spontaneous way until satisfied." *Obama* was chosen as one of hundreds of images of the new President at the *Manifest Hope: DC* exhibition in Washington, DC, during the inauguration.

Chiaki Doshō of Japan produced her piece, *Cherry Blossom Mini World*, using a direct machine appliqué technique of her own creation. "When cherry blossom petals flutter in the wind, it causes me to reflect," said Doshō. "My heart becomes as free as a petal." She cut each small petal one by one from old Japanese silk kimono, then held these together with woolen embroidery yarn.

"The design for my quilt, *Feather Flower #1*, grew out of a series of small doodles and pencil sketches on the theme of fantasy feathers and flowers," said Carol Bryer Fallert of Paducah, Kentucky. After sketching the design in pencil, Fallert created a color study in the CoreIDRAW® software program. Although it looks like many fabrics, it was created from a single piece of 100% cotton *Rainbow* fabric from Fallert's *Gradations* collection for Benartex. She machine pieced, appliquéd, and quilted *Feather Flower #1*.

Patty Hawkins is inspired by her surroundings in Estes Park, Colorado, as evidenced by her piece *Aspen*







Top, from left: Bob Adams, Margaret Cusack, Chiaki Doshu, Caryl Bryer Fallert. Center: Patty Hawkins, Ann Johnston, Pat Kroth, Inge Mardal & Steen Hougs. Bottom: Velda Newman, Kim Ritter, Pam RuBert, Carol Taylor.

*Sentinel*. "To me, lone skeletal trees appear as sentinels, witnessing the longevity of time," said Hawkins. The silk fabrics were dyed by Hawkins using shibori, deconstructed-screen-print, and potato dextrin starch methods. Then she fused the fabrics with a tulle overlay to protect the raw edges. "I used free-motion stitchery in a circular movement over the abstraction of tree foliage areas, plus I stitched over a tree drawn on the back. Silver/white rayon threads enhanced the tree effect, followed by dark green and turquoise circular patterning over printed, bubblewrap-screened imagery."

"*Centered (wave 9)* is one in my series of monoprints with circular color movement," said Ann Johnston of Lake Oswego, Oregon. "I used thickened dye to color the cotton

sateen and created the diagonal linear movement with machine stitches and two colors of cotton thread." Johnston is interested in the variety of line types she can get using the mono-printing process, and she contrasts them with the stitched lines. "In this particular piece, I liked the lines and shapes created by the areas that did not receive the dye. I used tiny stitches in straight lines to contrast with the soft-edged flow of the overlapping circles. They stand out on the surface, and the viewer needs to look through them to see into the wave."

"*Frazzled* is part of an ongoing series of explorations utilizing a mosaic of fiber fragments," explained Pat Kroth of Verona, Wisconsin. Kroth used colorful commercial and hand-dyed fabrics of mixed content. "Some found objects embedded

in the surface include paperclips, buttons, candy wrappers, stamps, computer paper, mesh and torn plastic bags." Kroth created additional texture with layers of trapped threads, fibers, sheer netting, and tulle, then "energetically" stitched the work by machine. "I enjoy the multiplicity and ambiguity of meanings in my work, which invite the viewer to look further than just the riotous surface of things," she noted.

Inge Mardal and Steen Hougs of France usually work in a large scale. "The relatively small size of the quilt put certain constraints on us from a design point of view," said Mardal. "The composition had to be simple but interesting, so our design ended up as one person offering another a cup of coffee. And the cup, being small, had to be an espresso." The

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## Making a group show cohesive

by Lynne Davis

**W**hat makes a group show cohesive? How do you arrange a variety of quilts by different artists to make a pleasing whole?

The first, most basic thing to consider is the arrangement of the quilts on the walls. A nice collection of pieces, all hung equidistant at eye level, gives an elegant first impression. Judy Schwender, Curator of Collections at the National Quilt Museum, (formerly Museum of the American Quilters' Society, quiltmuseum.org) in Paducah, Kentucky, says a consistent sightline "is probably the single most unifying, yet easily accomplished factor in our exhibits. We hang quilts so all the midpoints are at the same distance from the floor, sixty-three inches."

Having the same distance between quilts and between the quilt and the end of the wall is equally important. This keeps the background wall from becoming a distraction, making it disappear. If you have quilts of different sizes, the larger ones should be on the ends with the smaller quilts between them. "Otherwise," says Schwender, "no one will see them."

Kevan Rupp Lunney, who hangs many shows by the Fiber Revolution group ([www.fiberrevolution.com](http://www.fiberrevolution.com)) uses a midpoint of fifty-nine to sixty inches from the floor, and she adds, "if space between pieces is tight, it can be one-third the size of the piece; if more space is available, use it."

Cindy Friedman, who designs the layout of the *ArtQuilts Elements* ([www.artquilelements.com](http://www.artquilelements.com)) exhibitions, agrees on the importance of sightlines and spacing (usually around 14 inches between pieces, 20 inches for larger ones, with room for signage). For her, the center of the piece is usually sixty inches from the floor, depending on space and audience. If the viewers are children, the center is lower.

"Consistency can also be achieved," Friedman says, "with a theme." A spring-themed show, for example, will have built-in visual similarities. Sometimes it's consistency of size that does it. She mentions the *Times Squared* exhibit of the Manhattan Quilters' Guild, in which every quilt was 36 x 36 inches.

Sometimes framing can pull everything together. "Fiber Revolution produces postcard-sized art quilts that are always framed in identical black shadowbox frames, and it almost doesn't matter what's in the frame; they hang beautifully and easily in grid formats."

Lunney suggests creating a story, with one quilt linking to the next like chapters in a book. "Lead the viewer into the space," she advises, "then have one piece talk to the next."

"A curator," she says, "is like a writer or a choreographer, or any artist. You have to grab the viewer's attention and don't let it go." To this end, she likes to make what she calls a "POW!" statement at the beginning of the exhibit, using a faraway wall and a large piece with contrast that reads well at a distance. If the first wall is in a more intimate space, she uses a smaller but very strong piece.

For Schwender, such a statement is not always necessary. "You want to present a body of work," she says. If there is a quilt that really stands out, she hangs it from the ceiling or uses one of the ten-foot moveable walls available at the NQM (formerly MAQS) galleries, so as not to disturb the overall flow of the exhibit.

These walls, by the way, are also used to place several quilts in a W-shaped arrangement, again with a view to keeping things harmonious. The visitor can weave in and out and see several pieces at once and be teased to the next wonderful quilt.

Prior to hanging it, Friedman lays

out an exhibit on the floor, on clean plastic sheets. "In my experience the show hangs better and offers a better flow if every piece finds its home before the hanging starts." She sometimes groups the works by artist if she has four or five with several pieces each. But more often, with a large group, she discerns which pieces "want to live together." Color, imagery, and size all play into that determination. A variety of "neighborhoods" offering different flavors can elicit a "more thoughtful response from the viewing audience." Within each neighborhood, there is often a dominant piece.

Lunney says, "Our minds want to see pattern, meaning, and similarities. How can these be highlighted? How can the differences among the various quilts be exploited to their best advantage? You can put two pieces together that contrast in some way, like technique, but are similar in color or motif." An example of this approach is given by Schwender, who did an exhibit of Inge Mardal and Steen Hougs quilts. "I looked for a long time until I found the perfect artist to pair them with: Eleanor McCain. I had McCain's *Crab* from her Grid Series and Mardal/Hougs' *Trapped in Our Time* on two ninety-degree adjacent, moveable walls. Both used the same nearly fluorescent orange, yet one was pictorial, and one was geometric. They worked great together."

Schwender will hang quilts by one artist together if they form a series. If not, their placement is determined by her basic rules of sightlines, color, and voice.

This brings us to the important concept of voice. "Each quilt's voice or song must be heard, so I don't want to drown out something subtle by placing it right next to a quilt whose voice is loud, like cymbals



Two views from the 2008 National Quilt Museum exhibition *On a Grand Scale: Quilts by Steen Hougs, Inge Mardal & Eleanor McCain*.

crashing,” says Schwender. “A delicate pink appliqué quilt should not be followed, for example, by a violent orange one, like Barbara Otto’s *Conflagration Series #2: The Firebombing of Dresden*. Such an arrangement doesn’t do justice to either quilt.”

What she might do, though, is place a quilt with large concentric circles next to a Double Wedding Ring, as long as they speak at about the same volume. The next quilt after that might have colors from the Wedding Ring quilt, and another color relating to the quilt after that.

Since she always works within the same space, Schwender says she has a pretty good feel for what will fit in the NQM galleries. She uses her mind’s eye rather than a computer program to design each exhibition. However, a show won’t be finalized until she actually sees it hanging in the gallery.

Other curators who don’t use the same space for each exhibition have their work cut out for them, and skimping on any aspect of it won’t pay off.

“Most galleries have a floor plan to give you,” says Lunney. “Go to the venue and make notes of the obstructions and wall/ceiling heights. Is there proper lighting everywhere; flexible track lighting or dark spots? Make notes of focal point walls and long-range views.”

Some obstructions that are easily missed include furniture, doors that swing open and could hide work,

fire extinguishers that are not on the floor plan. Lunney advises against placing pieces near the children’s art class or a dusty pottery class or placing anything too close to the restroom because of the possibility of wet hands touching fabric. Don’t hang work between bright windows; this will blind the viewer. And if there are fresh flowers, don’t place artwork next to them. The flowers will win attention every time.

Lunney had eleven quilts ready for an exhibit at a library. Their sizes and shapes were designed to look pleasing on a particular wall. However, when the day came to hang them, the fire department had installed two blinking emergency lights on that wall. A completely different focal point wall was found for the quilts, but unfortunately, it was split down the middle by a painting. She now advises: “Don’t take anything for granted. Maybe you thought that the space by the office door was great and available, but what you didn’t know was that the portrait of the owner was out for cleaning.”

All three curators agree on the importance of good lighting. “A quilt can look like a million bucks with the right lighting,” says Schwender. Lunney adds, “It all comes down to lighting. Don’t put artwork in the shadows.”

Poor or inadequate lighting tops Friedman’s list of gallery limitations. She also avoids poor wall conditions, badly broken up spaces, and columns

or other view restrictions.

As for wall color, Schwender says that the light taupe color used on the walls at NQM shows most quilts to good advantage and does not distract from the artwork. But sometimes you have to deal with what you’ve got and make it work for you. Friedman recalls the original *ArtQuilts at the Sedgwick* exhibition, where the walls were black. “Some work wants to live only on white walls.” Surprisingly, though, the black walls “enhanced many of the works and gave them a jewel-box-like setting in which to shine. Of course, having good spot lighting and flood lights was even more important in that setting.”

Recently Friedman hung a collection of eighteen quilts from Fiber Revolution in a gallery space in Botswana, partnering with a local group, Kalahari Quilts, and an African doll maker named Puni. With different colorways and themes, creating a good flow was a challenge. The Fiber Revolution quilts were kept as one unit, but “the flow ended up being wonderful, and the flavors of all the work mixed very well.”

With a new set of pieces to combine into a visually pleasing, meaningful whole, each exhibition is a new challenge and a potential work of art in itself. ▼

*Lynne Davis lives in southern Illinois, where she enjoys doing needlework as a pastime and writing about those who make it an art form.*

# Teach online to expand your audience

by Carolyn Lee Vehslage

If you've been successful at teaching quilting and art design classes in person and you'd like to expand the geographic area where you teach, you might find that teaching online is worth considering. I've asked several SAQA members how they became involved with online teaching. Their advice and recommendations might help you determine if this avenue is for you.

**Ellen Lindner** ([www.adventurequilter.com](http://www.adventurequilter.com)) of Melbourne, Florida, teaches the same four classes online that she teaches in person: *Adventures in Color*, *Instant Art Quilt*, *Double Reverse Appliqué*, and *Design Your Own Nature Quilt*. Her color class is designed for any level artist, in any medium. The other three classes are geared toward quilters who want to try art quilting and are looking for guidance.

She teaches a new session every 6-8 weeks and keeps her classes small so she can be very attentive. They range from 20 to 35 students, depending on the topic. She posts her lessons to a password-protected web page, which she calls "the classroom," on her web site. Her lessons are PDFs that the students download. Show and tell and discussions are handled through a Yahoo® group. Students can post their work in photo albums on the class Yahoo group site. Ellen uses PayPal™ for payment.

Ellen finds the online teacher/student interaction to be very similar to her in-person classes. She finds it's much more convenient to teach online for both her and her students. It's also more lucrative. The difference occurs in the time frame of the classes. A three-hour in-person class becomes a three-lesson online class. Each lesson is posted on consecutive Fridays, with an extra catch-up week at the end. That means the students have her attention for four weeks.

The depth of teaching within an online class also has the potential to be greater. For example, online students might ask her about border fabrics and other finishing issues that could not have been addressed in the three-hour live version due to time constraints.

If you're considering teaching online, Ellen recommends that you need to be an excellent teacher to begin with. If you don't have opportunities to teach in front of students, then practice by teaching free online classes. Ask your students to give you feedback in return for the free class.

She says you must learn all the technical ins and outs of online teaching. If you want to teach from your own web site, you'll need plenty of web site skill, as well as familiarity with password-protected pages, PDF files, downloads, money transfers, and more. You'll be the webmaster, registrar, secretary, technical support, photographer, writer, and teacher.

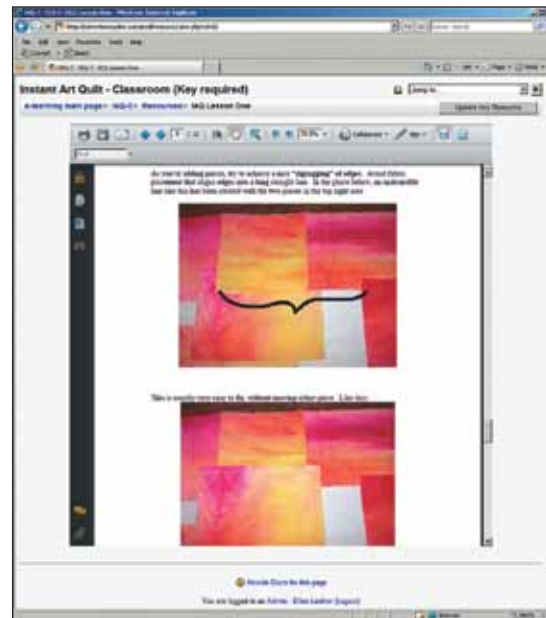
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*Online students have the freedom to study at their own pace.*

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There are lots of hats to wear.

Ellen stresses that you should read and reread every student email, along with your response, before you send it. Misunderstandings occur easily with email. Make sure your messages are clear and upbeat. She really loves teaching online, and she gets all the social interaction of an in-person



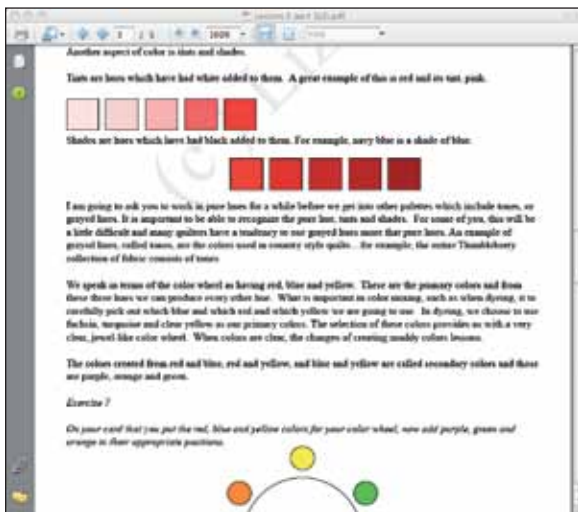
From Ellen Lindner's Instant Art Quilt classroom.

class, along with the adrenalin rush of seeing her students "get" something new and exciting. Both she and her students find the format very convenient and effective.

SAQA Africa representative **Dena Crain** ([www.denacrain.com](http://www.denacrain.com)) of Nakuru, Kenya, teaches six different courses through Quilt University ([www.quiltuniversity.com](http://www.quiltuniversity.com)). She says it's the world's largest and most popular online adult education facility for quilters. She generally teaches a course 2-3 times a year and has had anywhere from 10 to 100 students.

Dena teaches design principles and concepts to patchwork quilters. Students do their own original artwork, following her guidelines for designs. Emphasis is on the experience, not on replicating a project Dena has created. The core concepts are presented in a theoretical manner. Students are encouraged to experiment and to think for themselves as they work through the processes involved. Those who do the work are rewarded with quilts they can be very proud of and from which they can develop their own signature style.

Interacting online gives everyone time to digest the materials and suggestions, and time to think before



From Liz Berg's *Better Art by Design* class.

they speak. The spontaneity of an in-person classroom is somewhat reduced, but that's not necessarily a bad thing.

One of the problems of a classroom experience is that time is limited, and students may not receive as much attention from the instructor as they need. Online students have the freedom to study at their own pace.

Dena receives a percentage of the students' registration fees. The more students who take her classes, the more money she makes. It is to her benefit to market and promote her classes independently using her blog. She believes the advantages of online education are convenience, low cost, plenty of time to do the work, high caliber of teachers, unlimited interaction with the teacher and other students, and the opportunity to make new friends both locally and internationally. It is not unusual for Quilt University students to find they live literally around the corner from one another, but they also have a chance to interact with quilters from more than 30 different countries.

She monitors her students' assignments through the online discussion forum and gallery of photographs that accompany all Quilt University classes. There, students can ask questions and show others the results of their efforts and receive important feedback and critique. Any students who desire a more private interaction can email the instructor directly.

Dena recommends that before developing an online course, you should build your computer skills

in word processing, photo editing, graphic illustrating, and Internet services such as blogging, message boards, uploading, and downloading. You should have some familiarity with html and web hosting. She suggests you shop the marketplace to find out who offers online education and how they are structured. Seek your niche by knowing what kind of instruction you have to offer and how it might best be presented. Discover what unique services you are prepared to offer students and how best to market them. Competition is already fierce, and it promises to increase rapidly over the next few years, especially as current economic conditions favor the lower costs of online education over the high cost of commuting for instruction.

**Liz Berg** ([www.lizbergartquilts.com](http://www.lizbergartquilts.com)) of Castro Valley, California, teaches a course called *Better Art by Design*, a six-week class covering basic design elements and principles, including one session on color. She teaches the class about three times a year, to anywhere from 6 to 20 students. Her class schedule is available on her web site.

Liz uses a private Yahoo group to set up photo files for students, and she posts lessons as files on the Yahoo site. Students receive the lesson, do the exercises, post them to their files, and Liz critiques the submitted exercises on a weekly basis.

Students use PayPal to pay for the class directly through her web site. She markets her classes through the SAQA Yahoo group and QuiltArt lists.

**Debbie Babin** ([www.studioquilts.com](http://www.studioquilts.com)) of St. Leonard, Maryland, teaches two classes. *Textile Art with Pizzazz* consists of six lessons for intermediate to advanced artists. *Think Outside the Takeout Box* is four lessons long. She teaches her classes both through Joggles ([www.joggles.com](http://www.joggles.com)) as well as independently through a private Yahoo group, two to three times a year. Her Joggles classes usually have 35 students, and her Yahoo groups have 10-15 students. With her Joggles classes, she is paid when the class is complete. When she teaches independently, the payment comes before the class is taught.

When conducting a class, Debbie teaches one lesson each week. Joggles has a forum that enables her to communicate with her students, and in turn they can post images of the completed class assignments. The Yahoo group utilizes the Yahoo albums and regular email postings.

Debbie often converts the images to black and white so that she can discuss value choices. She may add lines or sections of color on an image, using Paint Shop Pro to illustrate her points. She offers optional critiques and finds that most people look forward to her advice.

Debbie finds teaching online requires very careful, clear, and sensitive communication skills. Critiquing artwork online opens the door for the most learning and, unfortunately, the most misunderstanding. She had an unpleasant experience with critique in the beginning of her online teaching career. She has learned to offer them as an option, explaining how she believes critiques to be extremely valuable. Online, she can't show facial expressions, give pats on the back, or show subtle body language, so she compensates by careful correspondence. She asks her students to tell her if anything isn't clear or isn't presented in a positive manner.

Joggles handles the marketing of

Continued on next page

their classes. When Debbie wants to announce one of her Yahoo Group classes, she posts to email groups that allow announcements. She has taken out ads in print and online magazines. Debbie says that word of mouth is always the best source of advertisement.

Writing the text for the lessons takes a lot of effort. Her *Textile Art with Pizzazz* class took her eight months to produce. She hires an editor and finds that writing online instructions is similar to writing an instructional book. In addition, she needs many more images. Once the class is written, all she has to do is be available for the students. Debbie finds it hard being patient to hear back from her students. Her experience is that some of her students never communicate.

Debbie says that people take online classes for a variety of reasons. Most are seeking knowledge, and some are looking for social contact. Many people who seek online study live outside of the U.S. While they do

speak English, they can sometimes interpret things differently.

Debbie's experience is that not all online teaching sites are the same. She began by teaching on Quilt University. She found that their style didn't suit her, but when she switched to Joggles, everything fell into place. The main benefit of teaching online for Debbie is that the profit is better. The Joggles limit for the number of students is 75; that many would be impossible in person. Debbie says that if you treat every student with respect, kindness, and patience, online teaching will go very well.

**Terri Stegmiller** of Mandan, North Dakota, and **Susan Bleiweiss** of Upton, Massachusetts, launched [www.twocreativestudios.com](http://www.twocreativestudios.com) in 2008. They met through an online group in 2005. In 2007, they formed an official business partnership and launched their online magazine *Fibre&Stitch*. At the same time, they were both teaching online classes through a web-based retailer. They decided that it made more sense to host the classes themselves. Hosting the classes gives them more flexibility to run their classes continuously throughout the year.

They are currently teaching classes in paper quilting, mixed media fiber collage and surface design, journal and book making, silk fusion, and creative box making. They have several more classes in development that are scheduled to launch in 2009. Their classes run throughout the year on a regular basis. They've had classes with as few as 20 and as many as 100 students.

Once students have registered and paid for a class (through Paypal), they receive a welcome email and supply list for the class. They're also invited to join a student-only Yahoo group set up just for the class they've registered for. On the day class officially begins, students receive an email from the instructor letting them know that the class lesson has been posted and is ready to be downloaded. The email includes a link to a secure site along with a user name and password. The lessons are in PDF format and include detailed step-by-step instructions along with full color photos.

Terri and Sue strive to provide their students with as close to a live teaching experience as possible. It's important to them to respond to their students' questions quickly, and in most cases their response time is only minutes after a post is made.

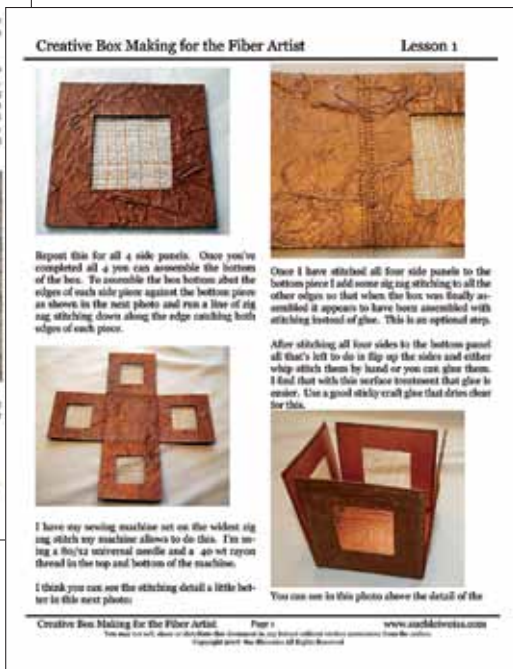
Their students tell them that a class filled with a diverse range of people from different countries enhances the learning experience. The interaction across cultures exposes the students to new materials and methods and gives everyone a chance to see how someone in a different country interprets the lessons.

Their current marketing campaign includes advertising on several web sites. They also have a print ad campaign with full-color ads running in *Somerset Studio*, *Belle Armoire*, *Where Women Create*, *Somerset Art Journaling*, *Quilting Arts* and *Cloth Paper Scissors*.

Terri and Sue recommend that if you are interested in hosting online classes, do your homework! Make sure you're ready for the commitment



Pages from Terri Stegmiller's *Faces on Fabric* and Sue Bleiweiss' *Creative Box Making for the Fiber Artist*.



of teaching online, especially if you're going to host your own classes. Keep in mind that your web host must provide you with a way to password-protect your lessons. You'll need to keep track of student email addresses so that notifications can be sent regarding lesson availability. Your email software must be able to handle bulk mailings.

Make sure you have the appropriate software to write and illustrate your lessons. Good photography, writing, and communication skills are required. Remember that your students will be expecting timely answers to their questions, so you'll need to be available to respond regularly throughout the day. Consider asking someone to test your lessons for you.

**Myrna Giesbrecht** ([www.myrnagiesbrecht.com](http://www.myrnagiesbrecht.com)) of Kamloops, British Columbia, Canada, teaches *Design: The Foundation, The Color Course, Self Expressions, and Women Art Life* through her web site. All of

her courses focus on life and creativity coaching. She doesn't teach any pattern or technique classes.

Currently, she is only teaching online during the Canadian winter from the beginning of January to the end of March. At one point, she was working seven days a week, forty-nine weeks of the year, and it became overwhelming. Even though she worked mostly from home, constantly being "on" wore her out. She has discovered how important it is to pace herself. Once her courses are consistently full, she will add fall classes.

Before Myrna started teaching through her own web site, she taught for a recognized web site where there were significantly larger class sizes. A class of fifty or more students operates differently, but for her is still completely manageable. It can be quite busy at the beginning, but typically by the end of the class, a very small percentage of the students are still actively involved. Now that she's using her own web site, she has

a minimum class size of six students and a maximum of twenty students. It's important to have enough students to keep the momentum going.

In the past, Myrna has placed ads in *Quilting Arts* and *Cloth Paper Scissors*, as well as smaller regional magazines. Currently, she is advertising by word of mouth, through her signature line on her emails, and by placing non-commercial postings on mail lists that lead people to visit her blog or web site.

I want to thank Ellen, Dena, Liz, Debbie, Myrna, Terri, and Sue for their thoughtful answers to my questions about online teaching. I hope their experiences will guide you if you decide to give online teaching a try. ▼

*SAQA Journal editor Carolyn Lee Vehslage is a fiber artist and is 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).*

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## Visioning project

from page 4

concrete goals, set your timeline, and document your efforts. You may also help other Visioning Project participants with their goals by sharing your knowledge. This isn't mandatory, but it will be greatly appreciated.

SAQA will provide you with mentorship to assist you in your specific goals, assist with the collaboration of participants, publicize your success stories, and feature you in a documentary if you achieve your goals.

There will be a special icon that you can put on your web site or blog page denoting your involvement in the Visioning Project. This program is open to all SAQA members regardless of membership status.

So join me in making your dream become a reality! ▼

*SAQA President Lisa Chipetine is a fiber artist and co-founder of QuiltCritique.com. She lives in West Hempstead, New York, and her web site is www.threadplay.com.*

## Marketing

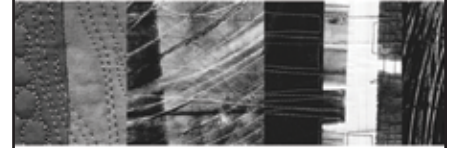
from page 11

four quarterly issues of the *Professional Quilter* in 2009. I consider it very inexpensive advertising at \$100 for four issues. I have sold only a few bundles of what I've dyed so far, and I'm only dyeing batches as they are ordered or as I need them for my own artwork. I may also consider advertising in the "ezine" that Morna Golletz writes as well. I've seen fellow SAQA member Gloria Hansen advertise in the ezine previously.

Managing the business side of creating art can be a daunting task and does require a bit of organization. The biggest challenge for me is to not let it overwhelm my limited time, or I'll never get into the studio. ▼

*SAQA active member Jean M. Judd is an art quilter actively promoting her artwork. She lives in Cushing, Wisconsin. Her web site is www.jeanjudd.com.*

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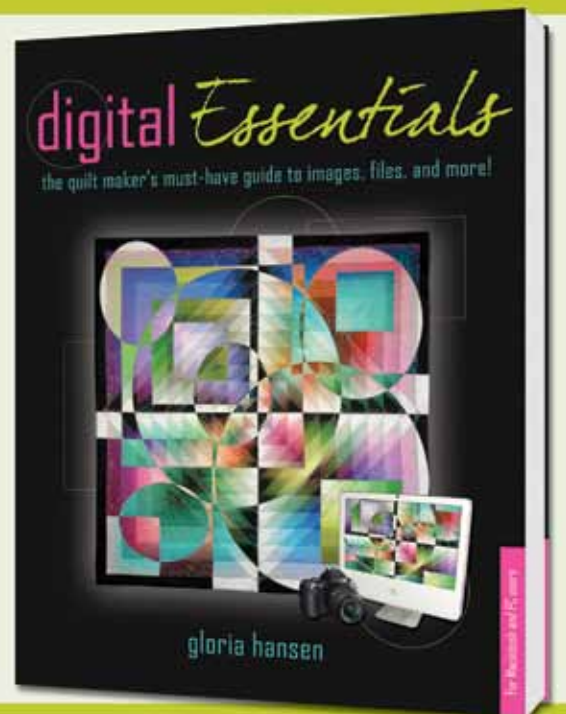
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## Conference

from page 8

inch, and adjust that by selling larger works for less. Variables in this pricing formula include complexity of design and construction, detail, embellishments, and special techniques, as well as a “gut feel” about the piece.

Provenance of a quilt, such as inclusion in shows and publications, can also increase the price. For many artists, pricing remains subjective; it has to “feel” right for them. Selling a piece can validate an artist. Some artists price more recent work higher. The consensus was that collectors know what they like and they buy based on their own interest, not necessarily because of the price.

Some artists advise that if things aren't selling, it might indicate a need to change the size, venue, or price. If everything is selling, it may be time to raise prices. Also discussed was how to find customers. Most agree a website showing a body of work is

necessary today. 91% of the artists surveyed have a website, and 75% have sold from it. This accounts for 19% of the sales in the survey. One third of the respondents have gallery representation resulting in 17% of the sales. The highest percentage of sales (21%) is from direct sales. Public art commissions account for only 2% of sales.

*Editor's note: Carol Taylor's workshop information will be presented in greater detail in an upcoming series of Journal articles.*

### Marketing Outside the Box

with Lisa Chipetine

*Notes from Lisa's posting on SAQA-U*

The mini-workshop began with an entertaining and inspiring video presentation put together by Michele Hardman. Lisa's discussion on

marketing for artists started with the need to determine your personal goals for marketing. Is it to create sales or just for exposure? It's important to be honest with yourself.

You must develop a budget you are able to comply with. You need to identify what stands out about your work. Is it whimsical, funny, or shocking? What aspect of it could you promote that would make people remember it?

Take a very good detail shot of one of your pieces and create a logo around it. It's possible that you may need help from a graphic artist for this part. Then, create a tagline to go with it. Lisa's tagline is “Quilts, they're not for the bed anymore.”

Identify and investigate the availability of a website URL to align with the concepts you have defined above; for example, [www.rocklady.com](http://www.rocklady.com) or [www.funnyquilts.com](http://www.funnyquilts.com). Make sure it's

Continued on page 34

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## Conference

from page 33

short and easy to remember and spell.

Design stationery, print, and web materials (embeddable jpegs for emails or attachments) to create your overall brand. Make sure everything you send out has your logo, tagline, URL, and contact information. Make sure you have a smiling headshot with one of your quilts in the background to personalize your work.

People want to know your story, so create a 150-word synopsis of what inspired the work, and what you want to portray to the viewer. If you don't have a website, get your own wiki, which is fast, cheap, and easy, ([www.wikispaces.com](http://www.wikispaces.com)).

Define industries and venues where you could market your story. Purchase mailing lists targeting these specific venues, industries, or individuals. You can also produce mass mailings in print and email. Check out [www.constantcontact.com](http://www.constantcontact.com).

## Self Publishing

with Carol Ann Waugh

Notes by Cynthia Long

Carol Ann's interesting lecture focused on how self-publishing can be successful, and why the do-it-yourself approach benefits the artist the most.

She began by stating that if you are "out there" as an artist, you should publish. When you write, you become the expert, creating a legacy and becoming part of history. Your book is listed in the Library of Congress. Carol believes it is the artist's responsibility to write.

Current publishing options are offset, print on demand (POD), and PDF. POD is available from [blurb.com](http://blurb.com) and [mypublisher.com](http://mypublisher.com) and is an inexpensive way to protect and copyright work. It costs about \$14.95 for a 42-page book.

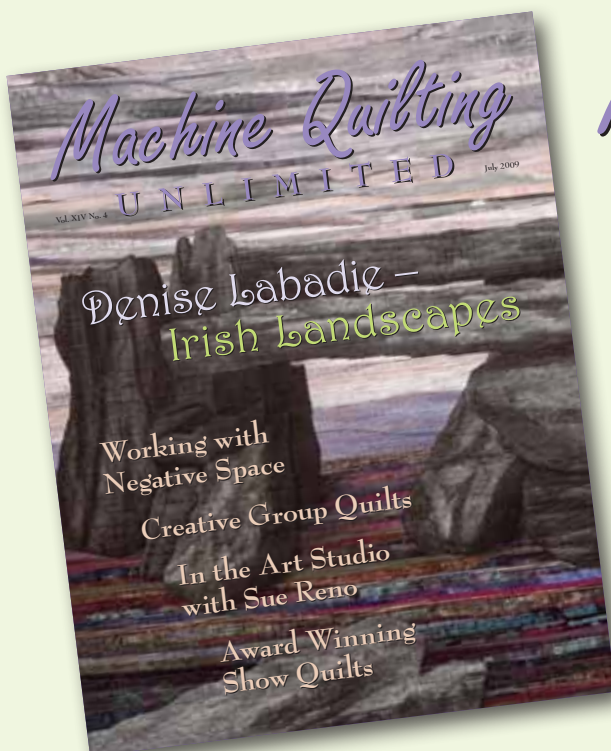
Samples of offset print books done in China and Singapore and

POD books were passed around the room. Quality of print and color is a concern. In print, image means everything. You have to think about graphic design and self-presentation. There was a cost/benefit discussion about Word vs. a graphic design program like Adobe® InDesign®.

Another way to publish is through PDF to download from your website. Image and trademark are concerns with this approach.

When planning a book, you need a 2-year startup plan that includes:

- Pricing—common price points are \$19.95, \$24.95, \$29.95
- Cost to produce, including design, paper, printing, and binding. Many offset printers group pricing structure so that 3,000 copies will cost the same to produce as 1,000.
- Publicity
- Advertising—direct mail, flyers, business cards, inserts in other



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Other points to consider are:

- Timeline—plan on 3-4 years to break even.
- Marketing—promotion, book-signing events, quotes from peers on jacket cover, sending out copies for early reviews and publicity.
- Distribution: yourself, websites, quilt and fabric stores, art stores. How you sell your book will determine your profit.
- Fulfillment: Garage? Storage? Amazon?
- ISBN number. This is required in order to sell through retail or wholesale distribution.

If you do seek a professional team for publishing your book, consider [elance.com](http://elance.com) or [guru.com](http://guru.com) as resources.

There are three basic routes you can take for publishing your book.

The do-it-yourself route gives you total control, but there is a steep learning curve. You must budget for errors and you are responsible for picking the right vendors.

Hiring a consultant is a more expensive option, but you are not alone in making decisions. Choose one who offers expertise in marketing and distribution.

Self publishing services are relatively inexpensive and offer a somewhat personalized approach. Services can be purchased in packaged groups of resources. They can help manage quality of product and fulfillment. One final note: Be aware of vanity press services.

## Time Management

with Gwyned Trefethen

Notes from Gwyned's handouts

Gwyned hosted a spirited workshop on prioritizing what is important in our lives and making it work. She divided

her discussion into several segments:

**Setting Priorities:** You will always find time for that which you place first. If not now when? If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there. The best preparation for tomorrow is the proper use of today.

**Getting Started:** Nothing is accomplished until you take the first step. Courage is not the absence of fear but the mastery of it.

**Slow Down, or Why the Tortoise Won the Race:** If you don't have time to do it right, when will you have time to do it over? Efficiency is avoiding extra work by doing it right the first time. Failure to plan is planning to fail.

"A successful life does not result from chance, nor it is determined by fate or good fortune, but rather through a succession of successful days." –Ari Kiev

She discussed how to set **SMART** goals:

**Specific** – Goals must be concrete; for example, "I will write in my journal first thing in the morning."

**Measurable** – You can't know if you attained your goal unless you have something to measure it by. Example: "I will add 100 new contacts to my marketing list."

**Attainable** – Goals should raise the bar, but not be so unattainable that you set yourself up for possible failure. "I will apply for an artist-in-residence program" is an attainable goal. You have control. It is a step forward in your career, but picking the prestigious "hot spot" may not be attainable because someone else makes the decision on whether you get the position or not.

**Relevant** – Goals should move you forward along the path you have determined for yourself. If you want to write a book on the class you have been teaching, a relevant goal would be to speak with five authors about what they wished someone had told them about the

process of writing and publishing a book.

**Time anchored** – Goals should have deadlines. Example: "I will be able to resize, crop, and adjust the dpi on my photos by August 1, 2009." ▼

The conference DVDs are available through the SAQA bookstore:

**Keynotes DVD**—Alyson B. Stanfield: *Tough Times Call for Tough Artists* and Don Bacigalupi: *A Museum Director's Perspective*

**Panels DVD**—*Quilt National '09 Jurors panel* with Katie Pasquini Masopust, Sue Benner & Ned Wert; *What's Next? panel* with Susan Shie, Therese May, Dominic Nash, Robin Schwalb, Sally Sellers; and *SAQA's First 20 Years and Beyond* – *The Presidents panel* with Yvonne Porcella, Katie Pasquini Masopust, Judith Content, Lisa Chipetine

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## Critique principles

from page 19

project movements of both falling and flying. Rotating *Thoughts of Flying* 180 degrees would have presented the illusion of birds taking off from a grassy field, removing any ambiguity about the motion of flight, and resulting in a much less interesting quilt. The tension produced by fragments spiraling in complementary colors reflects the intellectual content. Are these supposed to be birds gliding down, trying to fly up again? Do the shapes symbolize giddy indecisiveness and a yearning to be uplifted? Or perhaps the colors themselves have escaped the artist's control, flying away on her own thoughts of flying.

Dark shadows in the blue ground add to the sense of depth; in fact, this seemingly simple composition consists of six layers, all calculated to push those wedge-shaped fragments toward the viewer. Lauterborn

carefully balances line, color, and mass to build a complex, textured surface. *Thoughts of Flying* is one of her best quilts yet.

Principles of design can be used to evaluate quilts in virtually any style. Here we discussed abstraction, representation, and a quasi-installation piece, considering each work on its own merits, within the thematic requirements for the exhibition. Many more wonderful quilts can be seen in *Musings*, and I am honored to have been the juror for this competition. ▼

SAQA professional artist member Sandra Sider is the critic for [www.quiltcritique.com](http://www.quiltcritique.com), a semi-monthly program produced by SAQA President Lisa Chipetine for quilt artists at all levels. She lives in The Bronx, New York, and her web site is [www.sandrasider.com](http://www.sandrasider.com).

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## Art Gallery in a Box IV

from page 25

whole-cloth quilt is hand-painted and free-motion quilted.

Velda Newman, of Nevada City, California, said that she had been researching North American water birds for her next subject. "I like to make small studies—in this case, shore birds—to try out different techniques including threadwork, painting, and ink work." *Gull*, a closeup profile of the aquatic fowl, also includes appliqué, hand stitching, and paint.

*Making a Clean Sweep* by Kim Ritter of Houston, Texas, depicts a woman—times four—sweeping a black-and-white tiled floor. "I like how the convergence of the floor made sort of a traditional quilt pattern," said Ritter. "My newest works explore the more practical side of womanhood. Whenever the female form emerges in my work, she is strong and vibrant, a force of nature, someone to be reckoned with." Ritter began *Making a Clean Sweep* with a drawing and printed it with an inkjet printer. It was then machine

quilted with metallic thread. "My titles are always a joke, a pun, or a double entendre. I leave it open to interpretation."

Pam RuBert of Springfield, Missouri, also found the 12x12-inch size challenging. "Rather than try to miniaturize a work that's intended to be bigger, I chose to distill one small thought—a little haiku moment," said RuBert of the piece, which features her alter-ego PaMdora. "Last autumn as I pulled sweaters out of my closet, I found several with moth-holes. I looked down at one of my favorites and thought of the exact words I used for the title: *Oh No, Another Moth-Eaten Sweater!*" I condensed the whole story into that one moment of little criminal moths flying from the holes. I used small, sharp scissors and a file to make frayed, raggedy holes in the top layer of fabric." The piece is layered cotton, free-motion quilted, with hand-stitched moth "flight patterns" and beading.

Carol Taylor of Pittsford, New York, created *Foliage #2* as a small version of the main component—large leaves—in her *Foliage* series. "This quilt celebrates the vibrant changes of color brought on by the Fall season contrasted against a crisp, bright blue sky," said Taylor. "Satin stitching enhances the leaf edges, veins, and hand-dyed cotton sateen fabrics in rich autumn colors. I cut large leaves with the veins either fused on or cut out. I covered all raw edges with dense satin stitching to create a lush finish and some depth, using 30-weight rayon thread."

Information on the funds raised by Art Gallery in a Box IV is on the SAQA web site. Thank you to the artists who generously donated their time and talent to create a truly stunning collector's piece. ▼

SAQA active member Julie Filatoff is a writer and quilt artist. She lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico and her web site is [www.jirafsqilts.com](http://www.jirafsqilts.com).



# Reinvention

March 19–24, 2010

**Reinvention**—A life in the arts is a constant process of invention and reinvention. Techniques change, new materials emerge, inspiration evolves along with the world in which we work. Artists reinvent themselves as they mature or change creative paths. It's an exciting time to be a creative individual and change is in the air.

A conference co-sponsored by Surface Design Association, Studio Art Quilts Associates and San Francisco State University Art Department – Textiles. Participants must be members of either SDA or SAQA.

**Location:** Seven Hills Conference Center, San Francisco State University Campus, San Francisco, Calif.

### Events

- March 19-20, Fri.–Sat.** Conference
- March 21, Sun.** Studio and museum tours
- March 22-24, Mon.–Wed.** 3-day workshops

Information available on [surfacedesign.org](http://surfacedesign.org) and [saqa.com](http://saqa.com) after Sept. 20, 2009.

# Meet your regional representatives

## Kate Themel

Connecticut co-rep  
www.katethemel.com



“When I’m working on a problem, I never think about beauty. I think only about how to solve the problem. But when I have finished, if the

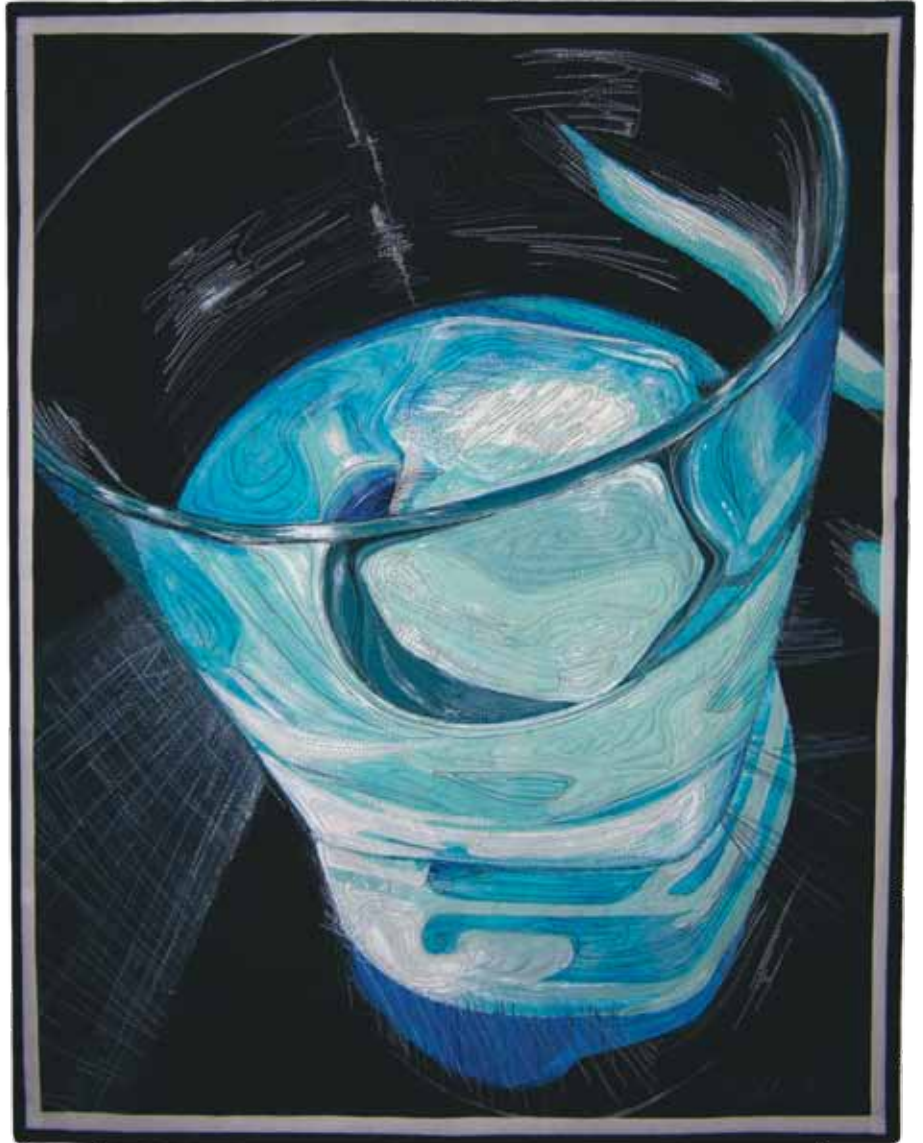
solution is not beautiful, I know it is wrong.”

—R. Buckminster Fuller, architect

If beauty is the artist’s home, then the elements of art provide the tools to build it. The traditional fine arts training I received in college continues to shape my designs today. Drawing classes demanded concentration and focused on line and shape. Photography taught me to consider the effect of light on an object and to build a balanced composition within a given frame. Exploring sculpture inspired my passion for tactility and manipulation of materials. Every day I practice painting, but now I use fabric as my medium instead of oils or acrylics.

The images that find their way into my quilts are usually simple things, common household items, and scenes from my own backyard. At first glance, an ice cube or coffee cup is unremarkable. But the primary purpose of art is not to reflect what is obvious before our eyes, but to observe intently and without assumptions, and to reveal beauty that was hidden.

Life is short, as they say, and you can’t take it with you. I’ve decided that the artwork I leave behind will immortalize only my favorite experiences—elegance, simplicity, rays of light, that I wouldn’t sign my name



*Ice Water*

21" x 17"

©2008 Kate Themel

to something I didn’t consider beautiful, and that I don’t feel a piece is finished until I love it.

The purpose of my work is simple: to add something beautiful to the world. I want that little space around my quilts to provide a sanctuary, a minute of tranquility in an otherwise stressful and frantic day. My hope is that the viewer will be transported for a moment—to a peaceful, welcoming place that uplifts the soul.

## Laurie Brainerd

Texas co-rep  
[www.lauriebrainerd.typepad.com](http://www.lauriebrainerd.typepad.com)



I began creating art quilts in 2005, after bridging an 18-year accounting career with a 3-year life-coaching career. With this coaching background

came empowerment to find a way to make room for art in my life. I also found myself trying to answer the question, "What is an art quilt?" I'm especially interested in the textural and dimensional qualities of quilt-making.

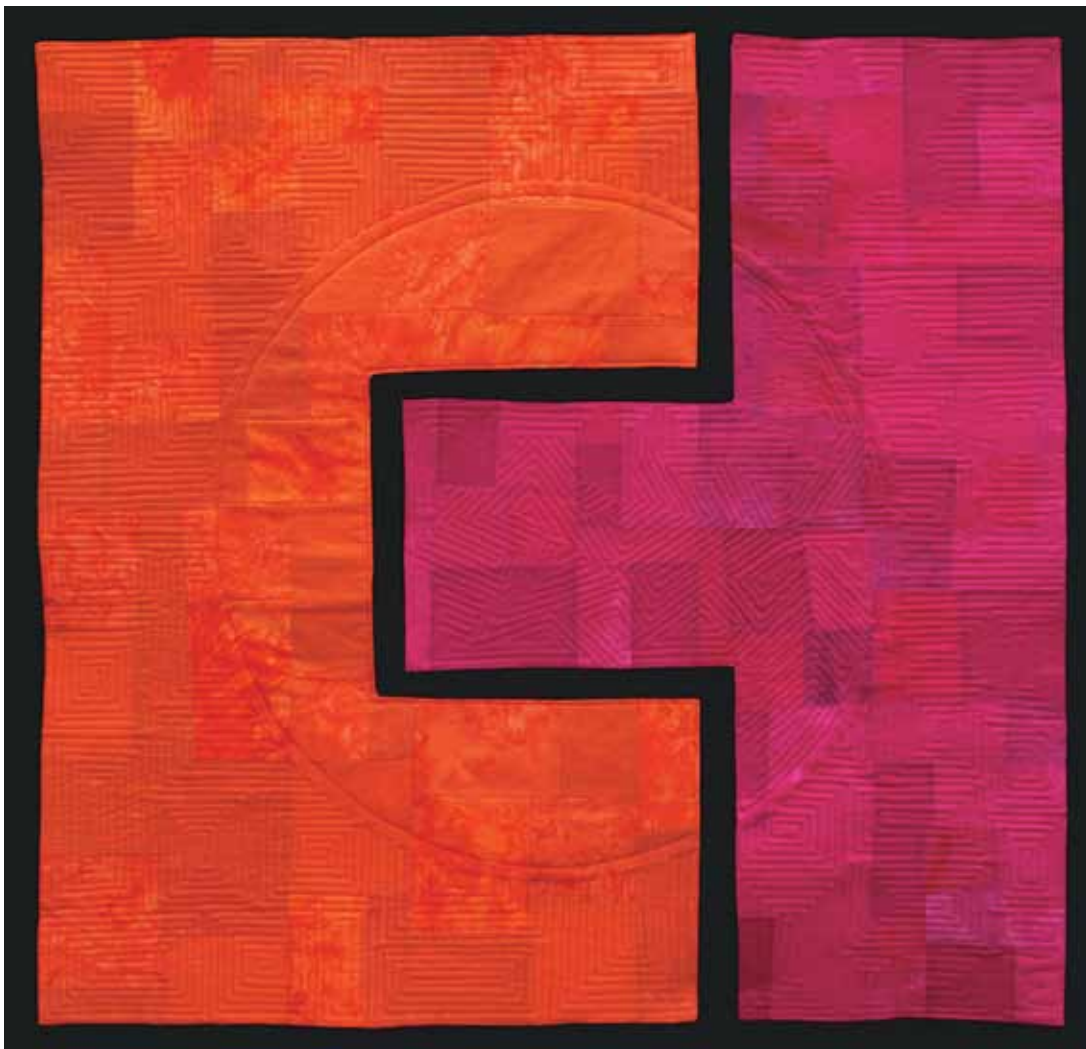
I believe that quilting makes the quilt. I call my style of quilting "quilting the hell out of it." I densely quilt almost the entire surface of each piece. While I didn't come from a traditional quilting background, I do enjoy paying homage to this tradition.

In late 2008 and early 2009, I created two SAQA "circles" that are currently meeting in the San Antonio/Austin and greater Houston areas, with a greater Dallas group beginning soon. It is my intention that these circles be self-perpetuating and fun, and provide a networking and educational resource for SAQA members.

I am also the founder of a gallery

called Fiber Artspace. During the first year and a half, I ran it as an alternative art space in my apartment that was located within the Blue Star Contemporary Arts Complex in San Antonio, TX. In March 2009, it grew into a full-fledged gallery in a small retail space within the same complex. I now run it co-operatively with three other fiber artists.

I am nomadic by nature but currently reside in downtown San Antonio, Texas.



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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 available  
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