

# SAQQA *Journal*

Studio Art Quilt Associates, Inc. ▲▲▲ Volume 20, No.2 ▲▲▲ Spring 2010



***Pink Leaf***  
37 x 41 inches  
by Pat Pauly

see page 27

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## Thoughts from the president

by Lisa Chipetine



**A**s many of you know, I hold monthly SAQA mentorship conference calls, as well as special sessions for members of the Visioning Project. My two

cats like to have freedom to roam between my “broadcast” computer room and the TV room, but my computer room door needs to remain closed so that I can record in silence.

My husband came up with a plan: a plan that would allow freedom for the cats, give him uninterrupted television, and enable my vision to become the next Katie Couric. He systematically took measurements of the door. He researched and found a cat door that could accommodate both cats. He took down the door. He measured and cut the appropriate

hole and installed the special cat door. He reinstalled the door, only to discover this:

No, you can't make this stuff up!  
You can either laugh (which I did)



or cry (which he did!). This situation could be solved by:

- a) Teaching the cats how to fly, or
- b) Buying a new door

In life as in art, you can either allow an issue to defeat you or you can rise above it. You will always hit stumbling blocks. It's all in how you deal with these obstacles. My suggestion? Take the lemons and make lemonade.

How did we do this? By finding a piece of stained glass to insert in the first cat door as a decorative element and buying another cat door to start again.

Sometimes we are driving so hard in pursuit of perfection that we fail to stop and see the wonderful opportunities that are presented. The next time you come up against a stumbling block in your work or what you consider a flaw, think of flying cats, laugh ... and go have that glass of lemonade!

## Meet new board member Carol Taylor



I love color! Since receiving my first box of crayons, I've been in love with color. But not until I began quilting in 1993, did I truly find the most joyous way of using

color, texture, and design together.

My work is contemporary in style and abstract in design, emphasizing the relationship of colors, values, shapes, and patterns. Viewers react to color, but I believe that although color gets the credit, value does the

work. The use of value is therefore very important in my finished pieces. Most of my work is improvisational. Extensive quilting of each piece adds another layer of color and design.

Since 2000, I have worked on nine series and find that working in this way stretches my creativity. More often than not, my pieces seem to grow larger than I had planned and become more complicated than I had anticipated. For me it's about the process of creating and what's discovered during that process. I love the surprises each piece brings.

My obsessive nature plays a part in my work too—I'm disciplined

and prolific in my production. Vibrant colors, striking contrasts, and machine quilting distinguish the more than 500 quilts I've created since 1993. I'm willing to put in whatever time it takes to realize my vision. This also shows up in the complexity of my work, both in structure and quilting.

Winning six “Best of Show” awards for six different quilts has given me great pride and satisfaction in my career. My work has been included three times in *Quilt National*, as well as in *Quilt Visions*. The Museum of Art and Design in New York City has one of my quilts



# Report from the SAQA executive director

by Martha Sielman



**T**here are two new exciting developments to share with you. First, SAQA is now able to sell member artwork through the web site. Pieces

traveling in SAQA exhibitions are listed for sale in a special section of the SAQA Store. Each piece is shown as a small image on the main page, with price, dimension, and date. The site then links to a separate page with a medium-sized version and a larger-than-full-screen-sized version (able to show tremendous detail), along with the artist's statement and a link to that artist's web site. Works may be purchased at any time, to be delivered after the exhibition finishes its travels.

Second, now that SAQA has more than 2,500 members in 31 countries, it's time to expand the staff that keeps this organization moving forward. Cheryl Ferrin is now SAQA's Marketing Director and Pat Gould is SAQA's Assistant Executive Director. Both will be working part-time allowing them to still have plenty of time in their studios. They join Deidre Adams (Art Director), Eileen Doughty (Web site Coordinator), Rita Hannafin (Traveling Exhibitions), Allison Reker (Membership Secretary), and Carolyn Lee Vehslage (Journal Editor).

In addition to managing the *Portfolio*, Cheryl will now be handling press releases, advertising, mailing lists, and SAQA's booth at quilt shows and at SOFA. She will be tracking responses to our various outreach programs and to the *Portfolio* distribution efforts. Cheryl brings a strong

marketing background to the position, and we're very pleased to be able to place this critical job in her capable hands.

Pat Gould has been a regional representative, an exhibition curator, and secretary of the SAQA Exhibition Committee. Her new role will involve coordinating training and support for the regional reps, managing the *SAQA Journal* advertising sales, planning for SAQA conferences, and running the SAQA Benefit Auction. Pat is highly organized and detail-oriented, as well as being a very warm, outgoing person—all important qualities for gracefully juggling such a wide variety of tasks.

Please join me in welcoming them to their new positions.

*(Editor's note: 2010 staff directory is on page 27.)*

in their permanent collection.

I also love teaching and meeting quilters all over the world. I'm a teacher by degree and outgoing by nature, and my quilting classes are said to be "fun, motivational, and non-threatening."

It's an honor to have been invited as the newest SAQA board member. I look forward to sharing the knowledge I've gained by traveling, teaching, and exhibiting to help with the many programs SAQA has created to promote art quilts and get them exhibited throughout the world.



**Silhouettes** 45 x 72 inches ©Carol Taylor

# Can you make a living selling quilts?

by Carol Taylor

In preparation for my talk “Pricing, Sales, and Commissions” for the 2009 SAQA Conference in Athens, Ohio, I surveyed 56 well-known quilt artists to find out how they’re faring selling their work.

My first question was “Where do your sales come from?” (Yes, that sounds a bit like asking “Where do babies come from?” and the explanation is sometimes just as hard to answer.) The answers are shown in Figure 1.

Many of the artists in my survey offered comments on their sales strategies. Janet Steadman said, “I prefer to have galleries do the sales part and refer all of my inquiries and calls to them.” Eileen Doughty says, “Only 25% of my quilt sales are from applications for public art, but public art sales generate more income (\$10,000 for one sale alone).” Ninety percent of Laura Wasilowski’s sales occur while she is traveling and teaching. Judith Content says, “I make the majority of my sales through exhibitions; however, I hold regular open studios and sell sizable pieces during these.” In contrast, Katie Pasquini

Masopust finds that 75% of her sales are repeat sales to established clients, with only a few from galleries.

I asked how many quilts on average the artists sell each year (not including a discussion of price range). See results in Figure 2.

Out of 56 artists, 54 responded when I asked them what total dollar amount they expected to sell in a year. The results are shown in Figure 3. (These figures are based on their predictions but are backed up by sales history.)

Several artists discussed their expectations. Jane Sassaman believes “There is no way to plan on quilt income... it’s always a bonus!” Pam Morris understands that having raised her prices, she may experience fewer sales. Kathy Loomis says, “Selling my work is not my primary intention. I want my work to be displayed, but not necessarily sold. In fact, I’m ambivalent about selling, especially my best work. I would rather keep it! I often label work ‘not for sale’ if the exhibit allows it, and I frequently quote very high prices that I have no expectation of being

met.” My personal favorite answer is from Jeanne Williamson, who says, “I always expect \$0, so anything above that makes me smile!” What a great attitude!

Some artists have found that selling smaller quilts is the way to go. Laura Wasilowski expects to sell 30 small quilts a year priced at an average of \$200 each. Melody Johnson sells 10 out of every 15 quilts she puts on her website.

Twenty-nine percent of the artists surveyed have gallery representation. Some artists prefer to give up a commission on their sales by having a gallery do all the sales and marketing work. Carolyn Mazloomi notes, “I have only one gallery representing me. I’m loyal to the one I have, and she requires the artists she represents to be signed with one agent only. It seems fair, especially when the rep is getting the prices you want for your work. I have sold at least 150 quilts at the gallery.” Janet Steadman’s work is in six different galleries. Sue Benner says, “I’m represented by multiple galleries, and there are geographical exclusivity clauses in the contracts.

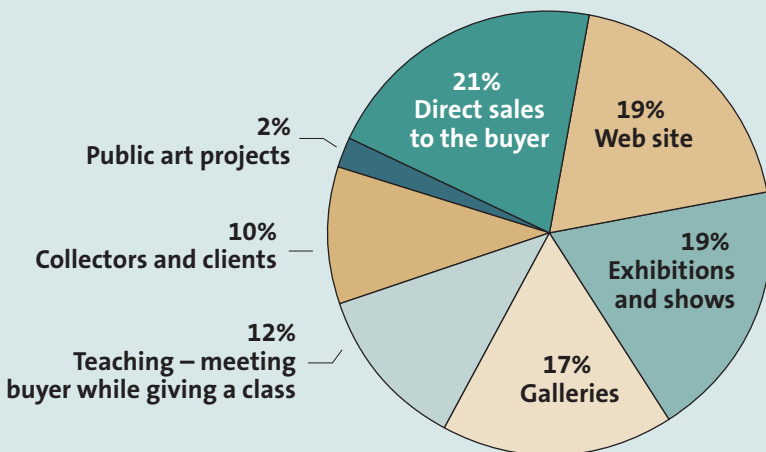


Figure 1

Where sales come from

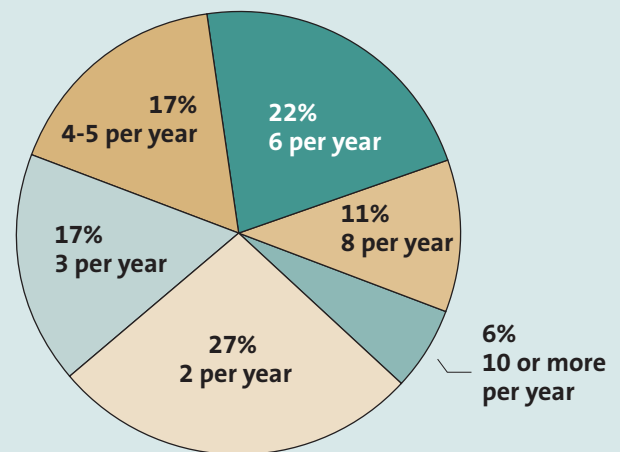


Figure 2

Quilts sold per year

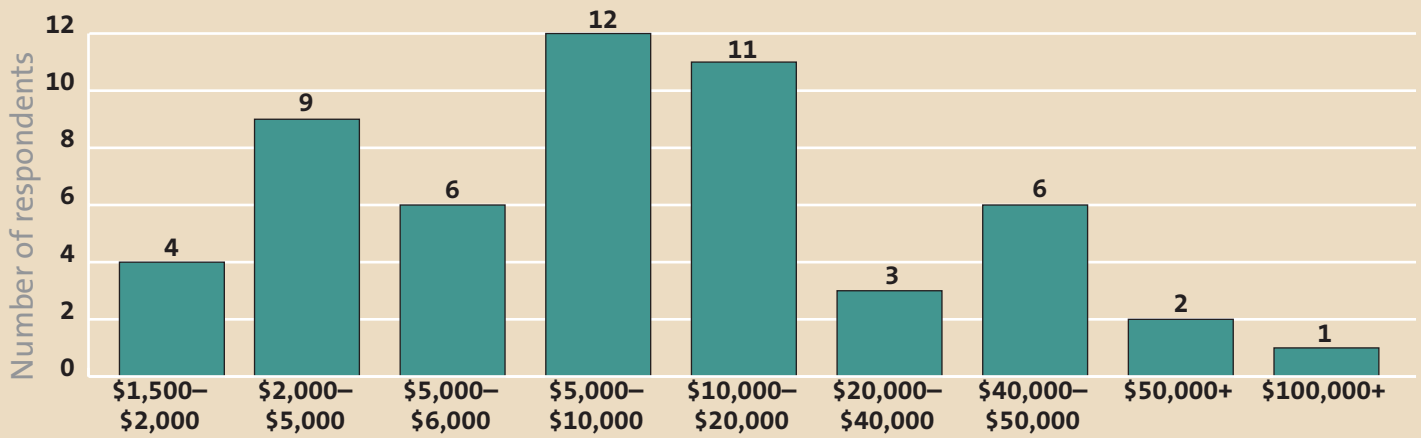


Figure 3: Average dollar amount of expected yearly sales

I like having someone else sell the work, which is good for my working habits."

Others gave advice about working with galleries. Elizabeth Barton is careful not to price differently from the galleries that represent her. In addition, she says, "I always give 10% finder's fees if a museum or other business contacts me about a potential client who does make a purchase." Regina Benson suggests, "If you do use a gallery, it's important to have confidence in the gallery's business practices. A gallery has to provide me with something I can't get for myself, and I should provide the gallery with work that sells."

Some had thoughts on working with multiple galleries. Elizabeth Barton says she tries to keep moving her pieces around between different galleries and locations. Janet Kurjan says she doesn't have an exclusivity agreement with her galleries, but she notifies them if she's going to have another exhibit nearby.

Seventy-one percent of the artists do not have gallery representation. Kim Ritter says, "I don't like to be told what to make." Barb McKie finds other outlets to sell her work, such as exhibiting with quilting groups like Fiber Revolution. She also has negative feelings about paying high gallery commissions. Cathy Kleeman's approach is to use the online gallery Artful Home ([www.artfulhome.com](http://www.artfulhome.com)). "I would like to have more gallery representation because I'm not very

good at selling by myself." Regina Benson says, "For the last two years, I've handled my own sales through juried shows, non-profit art centers, and small municipal museums."

I handle my own sales and am able to turn web site inquiries into sales by always answering immediately and quoting prices and options to potential buyers. However, I enjoy the sales process, while many artists do not.

I talked to Susan Shie, who has made her living by being an artist for over 25 years. She says, "I cannot count on making one cent from quilt sales. My husband and I are both full-time artists, so our income is totally arbitrary. I just know I have to try as hard as I can to make the best work and get the best exposure that I can. When I sell a piece, I have to make that money squeak, because I never know how long it'll have to last me!"

The next questions concerned how artists price their work. The breakdown is shown in Figure 4.

Caryl Bryer Fallert finds that "If the right buyer comes along, the price doesn't matter." Judy Dales says, "Smaller quilts priced between \$150-\$400 sell best for me. I believe this is a price range within which shoppers will impulse-buy."

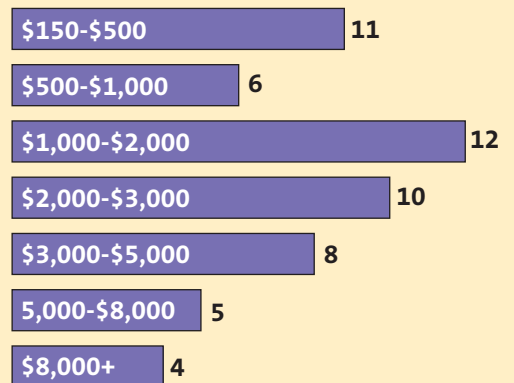
Six respondents graciously provided me their actual sales figures for 2001-2008 for comparison. For anonymity, I have labeled them A, B, C, D, E, and F. I cannot thank these artists enough for their generosity.

A sold 93 quilts for \$226,345 total  
 B sold 44 quilts for \$184,723 total  
 C sold 100 quilts for \$171,924 total  
 D sold 91 quilts for \$156,397 total  
 E sold 45 quilts for \$64,195 total  
 F sold 57 quilts for \$99,050 total

My conclusion from this survey is that while most quilt artists are not able to make a living solely by selling their artwork, they're making great strides in having their work purchased. My hope is that this information will help you with your sales. ▼

SAQA board member Carol Taylor is a quilt artist and travels nationally to teach quilting. She lives in Pittsford, New York. Her web site is [www.caroltaylorquilts.com](http://www.caroltaylorquilts.com).

Figure 4: Price range for artwork  
 Number of respondents in each range





# Composition and design

*Fibrations* artists demonstrate successful use of value

by Katie Pasquini Masopust

When I judge or jury a show, I consider value range, composition, and completeness of thought. However, I do not think of those things as I go through the images for the first time. The first time through I just pick ones that I like, pieces that have strong visual appeal. It's when I go through a second time that I analyze the works more carefully to see if they're strong enough to stay in the show. At that time I consciously think of those three areas of interest. The works that are usually eliminated are those that are predictable, of such poor workmanship that it distracts from the work, or have an inadequate value range. Recently, I juried *SAQA: Fibrations*. This article is a discussion of some of the pieces I chose, and why they are good compositions.

*Variations III* by Peggy Brown caught my eye and drew me into its center. It is a comfortably framed

composition with dark lines drawing the viewer into the central square. The lines, or blocks of color, serve to balance the more abstract, rough shape that takes up most of the right side of the quilt. The central square is made up of warm colors that separate it from the cool borders surrounding it. There is great detail in the center waiting to be discovered. These elements made me want to explore the colors and textures on each of the levels as I was drawn into the center.

Carolyn Ryan's *Sentinels Amid Merrymaking* attracted my curiosity because of the rhythm in the repeating diagonal strips that create depth as they constrict and darken, receding into the distance. The movement this creates is enhanced by the figurines that also appear to diminish into the distance. The bright colors seem to float above the dark ground. Sporadically placed lines and shapes create



*Sentinels Amid Merrymaking*  
28 x 24 inches © 2009 Carolyn Ryan

interest as one travels into the depths of the image.

I sensed an intimacy between the flower and myself in Grace Errea's *Grenadine Picotee*. Since the whole plant was not visible, my focus was entirely on the central flower, while



above: *Grenadine Picotee* 29 x 30 inches © 2009 Grace Errea

left: *Variations III* 30 x 22 inches © 2009 Peggy Brown





**Hair** 22 x 17 inches ©2009 Joan Sowada



**On Drawing III: A Little Stitching Madness**  
24 x 21 inches ©2009 Brooke Atherton

the background of leaves suggests the rest of the scene. This piece displays a full range of values: the lights sparkle on the petal edges while the darks create depth within the flower.

In Joan Sowada's *Hair*, the girls are moving to the right and appear to be running off the edge of the quilt. The questions that might surround the girls' story are left to the viewer's imagination. The value differences in each girl's dress and skin tone serve to enhance the distance between them. The background remains neutral so as not to distract from the story of the girls. In this case, less information creates more interest.

Brooke Atherton's *On Drawing III: A Little Stitching Madness* attracted me because of its combination of simplicity and intricacy. The visual texture created in the grid includes many fine details as well as color and value changes. It is interesting to contemplate the centrality of the most saturated grid, which is missing a tile, compared with the off-center larger grid and the earth-toned bottom panel. The heavily-quilted white framework enhances these details, and the very fine lines that come in from the border point me towards the

center, demanding my attention.

*Pond's Edge* by Denise Linet is about circles. Almost every unit has circles that emphasize the theme of movement. The rocks and pebbles depicted carry the circular theme further. The value variations evoke the light reflecting off of the water and the mystery below the surface. ▼

Former SAQA President Katie Pasquini Masopust is a quilt artist, instructor, and author. She has juried several exhibitions including Quilt National '09. She lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and her web site is [www.katiepm.com](http://www.katiepm.com).



**Pond's Edge** 27 x 32 inches ©2008 Denise Linet

# Improving the workshop experience

## Understanding the students' perspective helps you to meet their needs

by Pam Tracz

**A**s a studio quilter and artist, I am a passionate promoter of learning and developing skills. Experimentation is a key part of creativity and development of new techniques in the studio. Many artists become teachers in order to share what they have developed. In this article I will detail the results of a study done as part of my masters research on quilting workshops.

I went to nine quilting workshops with instructors from Canada, Britain, and the U.S. and asked the workshop participants to complete a detailed questionnaire before and after the workshop about their quilt habits and learning needs. In total, 107 Nova Scotian quilters participated.

The demographic profile of these participants is consistent with McCall's 2006 Quilting in America survey of the American quilter. One half of respondents report an annual income of \$50,000 (Canadian) or greater. In addition, 92% of students learned to quilt after the age of 18. These women have deliberately sought a creative learning activity and devoted a significant portion of their time and income in order to do it.

### Student Skills

Students who attend workshops are most likely to be at an advanced or expert level. 46% of the respondents describe themselves as advanced, "having made several quilts, changed patterns, and designs. Would be comfortable helping a friend with a problem or showing them a technique." Their number one motivation for taking a class is to learn a technique, as indicated by 49% of respondents. Next, they want to develop artistic confidence in quilting skills and design abilities. The third motivation is to learn a new tip, closely followed by the desire to have social time with friends.

When asked, "What is the worst thing that could happen for you at class?" 20% indicate machine or equipment failure. This included forgetting the cord and major machine malfunction as reasons for bad workshop experiences. The average age listed for machines in this study was 11 years old. Servicing prior to workshop participation would therefore be a good recommendation in a pre-class list.

The next most common anxiety centered on the quilter's own ability to learn. Participants indicated they were concerned about being unable to understand and learn, or not get the "gist" of the course.

The third concern referenced the actual project and the appeal of it when completed. "Not liking my project" or "ruining my project" were issues that frequently came up in responses. This is also indicative of the participant's level of artistic confidence and a learning attitude of "I must get it right the first time." As teachers, we need to prepare our students for mental blocks and the creative process before we begin the project so that no matter the outcome, participants feel good about their experience. In addition, we must recognize different learning styles and methods that people employ to learn new material. Anyone can learn new things if the materials are presented clearly and the student is given the appropriate amount of time to process it.

### Preferred Learning Methods

We have established that the women attending classes are knowledgeable and have a variety of experiences to draw upon when attending workshops. As a result, they have specific learning needs that teachers ought to consider when designing classes and workshops.

Ninety-three percent of the women reported that they believed they were able to do the project immediately after seeing the visual demonstration. However, almost one half of the participants (49%) felt that after beginning to work on the project, they discovered they needed more instruction. This indicates that students need to have a demonstration followed by individual teacher check-in to verify they understand the directions.

When asked if another set of directions was necessary for them to refer to, 55% said "yes." They were also asked, "How important is having another set of directions to you?" 73% of participants ranked them as "important" to "really important." Therefore, verbal instruction needs to be combined with visual demonstration for effective learning to occur in the workshop. This should be reinforced with written directions to which learners can refer during and after the classroom workshop. A handout is imperative to allow participants to take notes on the presentation. In addition, posting the directions on the classroom wall is an excellent teaching tool to minimize clutter in crowded workspaces.

### Instructor behaviors

We know that in the workshop, students place a high value on clear directions and seeing a demonstration. The next most important instructor behavior is giving one-on-one help, which is closely followed by sharing technique tips. All of these were closely ranked together as first, second, and third of the most-desired instructor behaviors. During one-on-one time, students are less intimidated about asking questions. In this way, students have the opportunity to gain new insights.





Judy Morningstar (right) of Manitoba teaching a class with the Mahone Bay Quilters Guild in May 2007 as their “Extraordinary Quilter.”

### How students learn

As part of the study, I had the students identify their preferred learning methods. The results indicate that participants chiefly prefer to watch and then try the task themselves. Their next preferred method is to read, think, then do. “Hear it, then try it” is ranked lowest. The majority of students in quilting workshops prefer a visual demonstration followed by practice doing it themselves in order to learn a new technique. This can easily be implemented in workshops and demonstrations by using larger samples in high contrast fabrics, then tacking them to the wall near clearly-written directions. This method allows students to refer to directions simply by looking up from their seats or by going closer for an in-depth examination.

### Space in the classroom

I was particularly interested in how space in the workshop affects learning. From experience as an instructor, I recognize this is often one of the most difficult aspects of the classroom teaching experience. Classrooms in my study varied in size, shape, location, and temperature controls. They were in church basements, hotels, and community centers. They were filled with banquet-sized (6x3-foot) tables and stacking chairs. Instructors arranged the room according to their preferences. Some were in pods of four tables with one person per table, or a traditional lecture-style classroom, or a U-shape. Seating was

often two people to a table with two or three rows and aisles in between. Space was always tight. The largest workshop had 22 people in it. Lighting was fixed overhead with a variety of intensities. Some workshop participants brought the lamps from their hotel rooms in order to have enough light to work by.

How does space affect learning? 86% of participants feel the proper space is essential to their experience. In workshops where each participant had his or her own banquet table to work on, 56% of respondents indicated that the space was just right.

The physical environment of the classroom has an impact on learners from a safety, creativity, and learning standpoint. Teachers can plan and accommodate for the space challenges by insisting on appropriate size tables, controlling the temperature, ensuring industrial-quality lighting, and putting a cap on enrollment based on the room size. Experiment with different layouts. Is it really necessary to have your own table/work area and another cutting table? Think of them as two more student workstations.

### Temperature

Heating and air conditioning were centrally controlled and varied by facility. The workshops took place in a variety of seasons, so the climate needs varied due to the outdoor temperatures.

If you’ve taught any workshops, you know temperature is a big issue

for participants. The average age of the women in my study is 56 years old. While room temperatures did vary, they averaged 21° C (69.8° F). 58% of respondents felt the temperature was just right, 38% felt the room was too cold, cool, or drafty; 15% felt the room was too hot or stuffy. Some participants had two responses, as room temperature varied in a couple of workshops. However, everyone had the same temperatures to deal with. The majority of the participants were either just right or too cold. Physiologically, it’s harder for our bodies to warm up than to cool off. While it may be unpleasant to be too warm, it’s not fair to cater specifically to those complaining about the heat in your workshop by turning on the air conditioning. Remember, arthritis and other conditions are aggravated by the cold, making it impossible for those sufferers to work and learn effectively.

I hope that these suggestions will enhance and improve your workshop teaching practice. ▼

*Pam Tracz has a Master of Adult Education from St. Francis Xavier University, Nova Scotia where her research area is how women learn craft. She is also studying for a Bachelor of Fine Arts, majoring in Textile and Craft History at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design University. She lives in Windsor, Nova Scotia and has been quilting for 8 years.*

McCall’s 2006 Quilting in America survey can be viewed at [www.quilts.com/announcements/QuiltingInAmerica2006survey.pdf](http://www.quilts.com/announcements/QuiltingInAmerica2006survey.pdf)

# Should you create a duplicate of a previous work?

## Consider the viewpoint of your buyers when working in a series

by Jean M. Judd

**S**AQA member and collector Neva Hart purchased an award-winning quilt that she had seen in a major quilt show. A year later she attended the same show and was surprised to see almost exactly the same quilt on display. The second quilt had minimal variations that only she or the artist would have recognized.

“As a quilt collector, I thought I had purchased an original,” says Neva. “The artist holds the copyright to the intellectual property, of course, and there was no contract between buyer and seller explicitly stating that the artist could not make a duplicate. As a purchaser, though, I learned the hard way to discuss this with future sellers, and there won’t be any more sales between me and that artist.”

As fiber artists, we may encounter this problem when we market our work to art collectors. While traditional quilts are based on copying historical designs, many fiber works being made today either resemble or *are* paintings. It’s possible that our work is therefore becoming more closely associated with painting, where copies are not accepted.

Historically, artists (especially oil painters) often painted as many as 20 copies of one of their works, with minor variations in the background or minor changes in canvas size. Since the advent of “modern” art, this practice has mostly stopped, as it is generally assumed that an oil painting is a unique work. An artist making duplicates is now assumed to be one who is not moving forward to explore new parameters or to continue on the conceptual journey started with the first piece.

I think that this is the convention that Neva was relying on in her purchase, and she hadn’t thought about the possibility of the artist making a second, almost identical copy. I would also question the show’s

criteria when they exhibit essentially the same piece by the same artist, two years in a row. Was this a juried show where the piece just slipped in, or one where the first 500 submissions get in regardless of quality and design?

Where does a “painting-a-day” come into play in this discussion of near duplicate works? I have read of numerous painters who set a goal to paint the same scene, from the same location, at the same time each day, for a year. They end up with 365 small works where they are exploring color, light, and shadow and developing their eye and technique. If I saw only the first painting of the scene and bought it, not knowing the artist was intending to paint another 364 similar images, would I be justified in being upset that what I thought was a unique piece really wasn’t? There would probably be very little difference between the one I purchased on day 1 from day 2, but there would be tremendous differences between day 1 and day 100 because of the progression of the seasons.

Welded, assembled, folded, or spindled sculptures are assumed to be one-of-a-kind and are not duplicated for other collectors to purchase. Bronze sculpture on the other hand is one genre where it’s assumed there will be more than one piece cast from the mold and that the collector is not purchasing a one-of-a-kind piece. Commission work in this area is the exception: when a bust is made of a person, for that person.

Photography and printmaking are examples of another genre in which creating multiple prints, usually numbered and in a limited quantity of 250 or less, is a common practice. Collectors know they are not getting a one-of-a-kind piece unless it is specifically stated.

How does this question of near-duplicate work affect textile artists

working in a series? How much difference should there be from one piece to another in a series so we avoid the situation that Neva experienced? What follows are some stories, and quotes gathered from our SAQA members. This is a personal issue with many viewpoints.

Carolyn Lee Vehslage, who usually works in series, relates that she did not continue with a specific series because of a complaint from a collector who assumed that she had purchased a one-of-a-kind piece, *Half Mast at Anchor*. Carolyn used a photograph of her sailboat in a New York harbor on 9/11 as the basis for this piece. She created this art quilt for the 9/11 auction exhibit at Houston to benefit the children of the deceased victims.

Carolyn made *Half Mast at Anchor II* for the person sponsoring a similar exhibition in Costa Rica. She made changes to the piece to reflect the colors of Costa Rica. She placed the image of the second piece on her web site. As she was preparing to make *Half Mast at Anchor III* as a gift for her father, Carolyn received an email from the owner of the original piece who had seen the new image on Carolyn’s web site. The collector was very upset that Carolyn had made another version of the quilt. Carolyn decided not to make the third piece in the series as she had intended due to the remarks made by the collector.

Kathie Briggs solved a request for a duplicate quilt by contacting the original buyer. “I sold a quilt that featured poppies. Almost immediately afterward, another buyer came forward. I told her it had been sold and to whom, since the two buyers are acquainted. The second buyer asked if I would make a similar one for her. I checked with the buyer of the original poppy piece, and she had no objection to my making a second





Vivika Hansen DeNegre has made approximately 40 different poses of birds over the last three years. When designing a new piece, she makes a re-usable pattern of the bird and usually creates at least three of the same birds at a time. She often uses the same background fabric and similar leaves or branch fabrics. Each completed piece is unique but very similar to the others of the same pose.

version of it. In further discussion with the second buyer, we decided on a slightly different size, composition, and color palette. The two pieces are related but not duplicates. Both buyers are happy."

Susanne Clawson says, "Think of how many sunflowers Van Gogh painted and how many views of Giverny and waterlilies Monet painted that are similar but different." However, Nancy G. Cook believes that the issue involves ethics and the kind of relationship an artist wishes to establish with buyers. She prefers not to make duplicates in order to enjoy the creative process of new ideas. Cathy Kleeman says, "There is usually a progression in a series as the artist works through ideas and solves problems. A buyer doesn't have the right to say that a series must end because he or she doesn't want to see a duplicate."

Dianna Grundhauser says, "We own our artwork and, unless other arrangements are made in advance, we are free to reproduce it as we see fit." Vivika Hansen DeNegre makes it clear that she makes multiple duplicates of some of her work. "I have

a series of small songbirds which I sell through galleries, and I have never had a collector disappointed that there are multiples of his or her pieces. I see these works as a potter might see a series of bowls or mugs: they are 'production' pieces I can make in a variety of ways that sell well and support my business. Each is different but made from the same pattern."

The perceptions surrounding the idea of making near-duplicates are of interest to me, because working in a series is my goal for the Visioning Project. I have 20 different quilts in one series. I've been told that as an artist seeking gallery representation and solo shows, I need to have created a body of work, which is why I'm working in a series. But I wonder: If there isn't a tremendous difference from one piece to the next, am I going to offend collectors? ▼

*SAQA active member Jean M. Judd is a textile artist residing in Cushing, Wisconsin. While trying to maintain a working studio, she is also completing commissions and devising new dye techniques. Her textile artwork can be seen on her web site, [www.jeanjudd.com](http://www.jeanjudd.com).*



# Sometimes you have to color *within* the lines

## How to achieve success when entering exhibitions

by Patricia Gould

**W**hen teaching design classes, my mantra for students is: “Color outside the lines.” This was drilled into me by my freshman art studio professor who had to rid us of twelve years of “coloring book” creating. As artists, we strive to be different, to create something new, and to think outside the box. However, as business people, we sometimes have to stay *inside* the box and follow the rules. This is of the utmost importance when seeking acceptance into the elite club of artists who obtain grants and public art projects or who are juried into exhibitions.

For the past ten years I have worked on SAQA’s Exhibition Committee, served as an entry administrator, and curated exhibitions. I’ve also spent countless hours helping the applicants who wished to change their price after we had already printed the catalog, who needed to have their images fixed in PhotoShop®, or who asked me to wait an extra day or two until their package arrived.

Even if you don’t consider yourself a “professional” in the art quilting world, when entering exhibitions, present yourself and your artwork in the most professional manner possible. This means submit high-quality images, read the rules, and follow them carefully.

### Digital formatting

It is assumed that your images will be in focus, on a plain white (unless otherwise stated) background, straight, free of extraneous objects, with the entire work in the picture. If the digital entry requires 1800 pixels on the longest side, don’t submit an image that’s only 700 pixels. I’ve received thumbnail images that were only 100 x 100 pixels when publication-quality images were requested. That artist clearly didn’t understand the requirements. If you don’t have the time

to learn digital skills, then pay an expert. When you don’t, an exhibition volunteer somewhere has to try to make it work or beg you for a better image. It’s better to send an image that’s too large, as it can be resized smaller. If the request is that you send both a full image and a detail image, don’t expect that the organizers will simply crop your full image to obtain the detail. Even if someone has the time to volunteer to do this, the quality of that detail image will be compromised. It’s your responsibility to decide what will make a good detail and take that extra shot.

Many organizations are now using online entry systems, and SAQA began using one in September. They not only have minimum and maximum pixel requirements but also have total file size requirements. The system will reject your image in the upload process if it doesn’t conform.

### Deadlines

Digital requirements aren’t the only place where the rules matter. Expecting organizers to consider your entry when you know it will arrive after the deadline is one of the most frustrating blunders you can make. If you have to wait until the last minute to send your entry, spend the extra money to send in your application by some form of expedited mail, with a tracking number, to make sure it arrives on time. As entry administrator for *12 Voices* and *A Sense of Time*, I was saddened that we had to eliminate excellent art simply because the packets arrived after the deadline. With online entry systems, missing the deadline means the system will reject your application.

### Size does matter!

If the rules say that your artwork must be between 24 and 30 inches wide, don’t submit work that is 20 or

40 inches wide. Make sure you know what the restrictions are before you even begin designing your piece. Online entry systems are sometimes programmed to only accept works that fall into the size limits; the system SAQA uses does just that.

### Pricing

If you are selling your artwork, you are a professional by definition. Figure out what your pricing strategy is and stick to it. Don’t just pick a number out of the air for the insurance value. Instead use your sales records. The easiest way to prove value if you have to make a claim is to obtain a written appraisal. Many venues will only insure your work for 50–80% of the retail price, since that’s what you would get paid if the work sold. Articles on pricing and insurance have appeared in past issues of the *SAQA Journal* and in other magazines such as *The Crafts Report*, *Art Calendar*, and *Professional Quilter*.

### It’s essential to be organized

Once you are juried into the exhibition, answer emails and send what is requested. Read emails carefully and save them, along with all attached documents in either a physical or digital folder. Meet deadlines for sending contracts, images, bios, or whatever is requested. Keep a calendar of those deadlines both on your computer, on your bulletin board or wall, and everywhere else it would help to remind you.

When it comes to creating your artwork, go as far outside the lines as you wish, but when it comes to submitting your work to galleries, juries, and other competitions, be sure to color within the lines. ▼

*SAQA professional artist member Patricia Gould creates art quilts in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Her web site is [www.angelfiredesigns.com](http://www.angelfiredesigns.com).*



# 10 Secrets of selling art in a down economy

by B. Eric Rhoads

If you're an artist blessed with a marketing gene, you may already know these secrets. Yet as I communicate with over 40,000 artists in my art marketing blog, I find that most have never heard them.

I hear from artists every day. Most tell me they're not selling as much artwork as last year. Some tell me they're prospering. The difference is that those who are successful understand these 10 basic secrets.

## 1. Attitude determines your success.

I'm not talking about positive-thinking hocus-pocus. But when I interview successful people, they all have one thing in common. They say, "I made up my mind that I'm not going to let this recession impact me." This is a critical step. Most of us give ourselves an out by telling ourselves it's OK to fail because everyone else is. But to succeed, you can't think like everyone else. I have a giant sign in my office that reads: "2010 Is Our Best Year Yet." Note the use of the word "is"—not "will be." It's important to train your subconscious mind to believe that it is. I have to look at it daily and not let myself off the hook.

## 2. Develop and follow a strategy.

You wouldn't take a road trip without a map, yet most artists don't have a road map for their art business. Most don't like to look at themselves as businesses, but as artists. But if you rely on income from your art sales, you're in business.

A critical element is to create a business plan. Put it in writing and mark the milestones on a calendar. Hold yourself accountable and look ahead. If you're about to miss a milestone, don't find an excuse. Your plan should include:

- Your financial goal (after taxes)
- Exactly how many pieces you must

sell to hit that goal, and at what price point

- In what ways you will sell your art

Develop a list of tactics and build them into your plan.

## 3. Make money while you sleep.

How can you make money while you sleep? The key is to find ways your art can sell without having to manage the process. You're just one person. How can you get several people viewing and selling your art? Galleries, for example, are sales agents—the more sales agents selling your work, the better.

## 4. Stand in a river of flowing money.

Where is money already flowing? Go there! If one city is selling a lot of art and another is not, target a gallery or a means of selling in the city where sales are taking place. A big New York City gallery opened a location in Beijing during the Olympics because of the influx of money there, and because so many Chinese were buying art. Art is selling well in some places. Find out where, and find a way to get your art there.

## 5. Price to the market without dropping your value.

I never recommend lowering prices because it's hard to raise them again. But when money's tight, it's easier to sell a less expensive painting. Many artists are creating smaller works. One artist I know is creating one small painting a day and selling the paintings on eBay (under an assumed name) for \$100 each. He sells almost every one and is generating an extra \$2,000 a month. He's also painting fewer large works, and his galleries are moving the small ones.

## 6. Increase visibility.

Seek every opportunity to increase your visibility as an artist. It increases

the odds of getting noticed. Bottom line: More bait in the water equals more fish on the hook. Work hard to generate publicity from local, regional, and national publications and websites. Take an active role on Facebook and Twitter. Post new works that have not been seen before. Send emails and notifications to collectors, and expand your reach. Place ads in publications. You need to be seen *more* when times are worse because you need to reach more potential buyers.

## 7. Repetition works. I repeat: Repetition works.

I've been a marketing guy for many years, and the most critical marketing lesson is that a single impression does not sell. People may see your ad or story, but they won't remember it. They may intend to respond, but they forget. That's why you see the same ads over and over on television. Repetition works. Single impressions do not. Repeat your message over and over.

## 8. Expand your market.

Do you consider yourself local, national, or international? If you only sell in your town or region, you're limiting yourself to local cycles. If you can get into more cities and art centers nationwide and worldwide, the increased exposure will lead to more sales.

## 9. Get creative.

Get some friends together and brainstorm. Make a list of 100 ways you can sell artwork. You say there aren't 100 ways, but there are. Force yourself not to stop until you get to 100. Don't judge anything. Write every idea down, then start trying some you've never done. Creative approaches will make you stand out.

See "10 Secrets" on page 33

## Jane Dávila

**M**y path as an artist has been atypical. I began as a printmaker in the 1980s and was very successful in that medium. I apprenticed with Carlos Dávila, who later became my husband. I was fortunate to find representation in a number of U.S. galleries, including one in New York City. My work was published in a national magazine, and I presented a solo show. All this happened before I was twenty-two. Looking back, it seems surreal.

Then I retreated from printmaking for a number of years. When I returned to art, it was in the form of art quilts. While the knowledge gained in my “first” art career was very useful in my second, there was enough of a difference between the two mediums that it was like a new beginning.



Working full-time as a printmaker from 1982 to 1988, I had prints placed in many corporate collections through the print publishing galleries I worked with, and I learned the ins and outs of the commercial gallery system and the corporate art world. My daughter was born in 1985. Then, having grown weary of the lack of

health benefits and steady income, I went to work at a “regular” job in 1988. The demands of raising a small child while working outside the home made it difficult to continue my printmaking career, and I decided to take a break.

In 1990, my mother opened a quilt shop in the metropolitan New York area and invited me to join the business. My mom had always sewn and started making quilts in 1976, but I didn’t learn to quilt until we opened the store. I didn’t even hear about “art” quilts until nearly ten years after that. My lightbulb moment occurred in 2002 when I realized that expressing myself as an artist in fiber and fabric enabled me to take my artistic training and experience and apply it to a new medium. I’m glad I obtained a good grounding in quilting techniques and history before moving over to making art quilts. I feel that the choices I make about which materials or techniques to use in my art are fully intentional and not born out of a lack of knowledge or ability.

My work tends to be representational, straightforward, and stylized, as it was when I was making prints. Most of my art quilts are small to very small, with the largest being no bigger than 24 inches on any side and most being less than 13 inches. I enjoy the intimacy of working small and simple.



*el cristanemo*  
12 x 9 inches  
2007





**run-off**  
12 x 9 inches  
2008

Words and text inspire me; the forms of letters and numbers often show up in my work as design elements. Typography and fonts fascinate me—there are over 600 fonts on one of my computers. I create on a very subconscious level, often not knowing what a piece is about specifically or why I used certain imagery or motifs until it's complete. In the past, I've tried to make quilts with very conscious intention through every step of the process, but I find that methodology difficult. I'm much more successful when I can be intuitive and let my thoughts drift and wander as I work. I always have a theme in mind, and I have many series going on at the same time. For example, my *Clima* series has been going on for the last few years. It uses images of beetles to depict my concerns about global warming and incorporates text in many languages to represent how the issue affects us all. Many of my insect pieces reflect the simultaneous fragility and strength of nature. I am drawn to natural subjects—fish, birds, leaves, and especially insects—and return to them again and again.

few pages of sketches in my journal to give me an idea of where the series is heading, and then the painting, printing, and cutting fabric begins.

I love to incorporate some method of printmaking techniques into my

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*If no one knows who you are or where to find you, it doesn't matter how much work you produce or how good it is.*

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art quilts. I use block-printing and nature-printing methods and have recently added calligraphy, intaglio, and monoprinting on fabric to my work. Because my art is mixed-media with paper and found objects, and because of its small size, I tend to

exhibit in galleries and art centers as opposed to quilt shows. Some of my pieces are adapted to allow for framing or mounting on canvas so the work is accessible and comprehensible to galleries and their patrons.

Goals are important for my art career, whether it's writing a book or article, teaching at a specific venue, getting into a certain show, starting a web site or blog, or creating a body of work. I always have a one-year plan and a five-year plan in effect. Breaking down the steps that are needed to achieve these goals, and then reasonably estimating the amount of time each step will take, allows me to accomplish my objectives. I'm a big planner and list-maker, which allows me to focus on and achieve what I have set out to do. I re-evaluate my goals a couple of times each year to see what kind of progress I have made and then adjust as necessary.

Marketing is very important, and I work hard at it. I propose articles to magazines and get published on a regular basis. I have Facebook and Twitter accounts and am active on both. I spend about an hour a day networking online, which has directly resulted in teaching jobs. My marketing experience for our quilt store for the last 18 years taught me the value of branding, publicity, and advertising. If no one knows who you are or where to find you, it doesn't matter how much work you produce or how good it is. You have to make it easy for your potential customers and patrons to find you.

In March of 2009, my mother and I decided to close our shop. It was a good time for both of us—my dad had just retired, and I was interested in devoting more time to developing my career outside the store. Now that I'm back to being a full-time, self-employed artist, supplementing and

Continued on next page

right: **haiku**  
12 x 9 inches  
2007

far right: **Anodyne III**  
12 x 9 inches  
2008



diversifying my art income is more important than ever. At the shop, Elin Waterston and I developed a series of classes that grew into a couple of books. We wrote *Art Quilt Workbook* and *Art Quilts at Play* together for C&T Publishing. Writing these books led to further opportunities to teach nationally and appear on television programs. Elin and I taped an instructional DVD, *Art Quilting Basics*, in my studio in Connecticut. A new book, *Jane Dávila's Surface Design Essentials*, was released in early 2010 and I'm currently hard at work on a fourth. I plan to continue writing books, and I have ideas for several more.

I also work at other related ventures. I design web sites for businesses and artists. I write a column on the professional side of being an artist for *Quilting Arts* magazine. I travel to teach and lecture all over the place. I run a retail Internet business selling art-quilting and surface-design supplies, and I vend at a few shows a year. Twice yearly, I host a quilting retreat for about 50 women at an inn in New England. I hold intensive workshops in my studio a few times a year and am looking forward to teaching online this year.

Because of my past experience as a printmaker and given the nature

of the art quilting industry, I have chosen not to make a living solely by selling my art. You have to focus on what you know and what you enjoy. I enjoy the diversification and variety of all of my "jobs" and have a number of new ones in my five-year plan. I do struggle to find time to create art and work hard to find the balance between the business tasks, the income-producing pursuits, and creating.

My father-in-law, Alberto Dávila, a prolific abstract expressionist painter, was a very powerful example of what it means to be a working artist. When Carlos and I were first married, we lived in Peru, the country he had emigrated from and where his father still lived. At the time, Alberto was already retired from his position as the director of La Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes (National School of Fine Arts) in Lima. He had started his own artists' association and was still painting. Every morning he got up, had breakfast, did the crossword puzzle, and then headed to his studio. Every day. I asked him once what happened if he got there and didn't feel like painting. He said that painting was his job and that he needed to go to work, just like everyone else who has a job. If he didn't feel like

painting, then he stretched canvas or worked on correspondence or cleaned brushes, but if he didn't take his job seriously, he couldn't expect anyone else to either. He had a very successful career and produced a tremendous amount of work in his life. That steadfast commitment to setting aside time every day for art has stayed with me. Just showing up is half the battle.

I had the fortunate experience of having been advised and mentored by several artists ahead of me in their career paths when I was an impressionable young artist. I firmly believe in the concept of giving back to the community. Although I did learn many things the hard way and made many mistakes on my own, the knowledge that was generously shared helped me immeasurably. The best way to honor that spirit is to pay it forward.

It's difficult to create in absolute isolation. I do work alone in my studio and my husband works alone in his, but I find that spending time with other artists, in person and online, pushes and inspires me. I meet with a group of about 30 women on a monthly basis, and we support and learn from each other. Occasional collaboration with

See "Jane Dávila" on page 30



# Easing the “pain” of art quilts

by Chris Pepe

**B**ack pain, neck pain, wrist pain: sound like something that affects you? If you are a quilt artist, chances are at least one of these do. In fact, statistics show up to 89% of all Americans have suffered from some type of chronic or recurrent pain.<sup>1</sup> The incidence of these aches and pains has increased over the last few decades because we spend too many hours sitting at the computer or the workstation, driving, on the couch, or at the sewing machine.

Your body conforms to your most common habits and activities. Sit on a chair for the next 10 hours and see how your body conforms to that

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*Statistics show up to 89% of all Americans have suffered from some type of chronic or recurrent pain.*

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stimulus. Now multiply that by 5 days a week for the next 10 years and imagine the kind of adaptation that will occur in your body. At that point, you become more efficient at sitting than at anything else.

Amazingly, your body will adapt to all kinds of stimuli. This is known as the SAID principle, or Specific Adaptation to Imposed Demands. The SAID principle explains that a movement or type of training produces adaptations specific to the activity performed. The body adapts to that

stimulus because it seeks efficiency. This means the body will make physical changes relative to the specific activity you are asking it to do.

For example, if you train for a marathon your cardiovascular system adapts to the stresses you impose on it, and it becomes stronger and more efficient. The result: running becomes easier. The more time spent running, or doing any activity, creates more adaptation and more change to the body. We now know that the body adapts to any and all stimulus, and we can begin to understand how repetitive motions and constant positions (such as sitting at a sewing machine for hours) create undesirable stimulus on the body. Long hours at the computer, wearing high heels, or always carrying your bag on one shoulder are all examples of things we repeatedly do that create undesirable stimulus on our bodies.

Postural imbalances and dysfunctional movements are born from these positions and repetitive motions. That's why so many people suffer from recurrent pain. We spend great amounts of time imposing physical stress on our bodies and not enough time feeding the right kind of motion back into our bodies to counteract the undesirable stimulus. This concept of repetitive motions that create pain and dysfunction is termed “cumulative injury” (also known as cumulative trauma.) Cumulative injuries tend to have subtle or vague symptoms that develop slowly. They begin as a small, nagging ache or pain, and can grow into a debilitating injury if they aren't treated.

As a fiber artist, think of how much time you spend hunched over your workstation with your hips stuck in a flexed position and your head hunched down. You are creating undesirable stimulus on your hips that your body is adapting to. Your



Kevan Rupp Lunney demonstrates stretching exercises

hip flexors (psoas) become shortened, your glutes become weak, and your spine becomes rigid. Then, when you go to stand up, there is a painful pulling on your spine and leg muscles. Some healthcare providers advise that you avoid the positions that are creating the dysfunction, but the reality is, you can't. How can you sew or drive standing up? The fact is, sitting is a necessity for a majority of the things you do in life.

How can you begin to correct your dysfunctions? Aside from finding a professional who is trained in identifying and treating the dysfunctions, you can stretch and exercise. A very common and effective psoas stretch can be done from a kneeling position. Kneel down on your right knee as though you were about to propose,

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See “Pain” on page 31



# SAQA member gallery: *Pieced quilts*



Nancy G. Cook

***Pelton's Rose-Gentian*** 50 x 45 inches ©2006  
nancycook.com

Upon reading that a new rose-gentian was discovered recently by John Pelton, an amateur botanist in his seventies, I was compelled to create *Pelton's Rose-Gentian* as a testament to the contributions made by amateur scientists and septuagenarians in the 21st century.

Pam Lowe

***Romerillo III***  
20 x 31 inches  
2009  
www.pamlowe.net

*Romerillo III* was inspired by a trip to Mexican villages in the states of Oaxaca and Chiapas. The image of a traditional cemetery high on a terraced hill stayed with me. The brown bits represent the crude wooden planks placed over the mounded graves. These planks, taken from doorframes or beds in relatives' homes, are considered "doorways" for the dead.



Ruth Powers

***Burlingame Fire***  
39 x 50 inches ©2008  
www.ruthpowersartquilts.com

In the spring of 2007 the historic town of Burlingame, Kansas, suffered a tragic fire. The fire was only a few doors down from one of my favorite quilt shops, but everything was successfully evacuated and the shop was eventually reopened. This piece was inspired by a photograph taken by the fire department on that day.

Photo used with permission of the photographer.





Sue Reno

**Fireball**

50 x 76 inches ©2008  
suereno.com

I grow this variety of hibiscus, which sports cutleaf foliage and enormous bright red flowers. The random-looking piecing surrounding the leaf and flower images gives the work some of the energy and movement of the plant in situ.



Linda Beach

**Map of Shadows**

39 x 54 inches ©2008  
www.lindabeachartquilts.com

A lazy summer afternoon studying the lengthening shadows on the lawn proved to be very productive.



Libby & Jim Mijanovich

**All In** 50 x 50 inches 2009  
www.mijafiberart.com

Working exclusively with recycled vintage clothing for our raw material, we challenge ourselves to transform simple, plain, nondescript fabrics into intricate and involved works of art. We construct our fiber art by machine piecing numerous fragments of vintage clothing and intricately embellishing with metallic threads.

# Teleseminars, webcasts, and webinars

## Using technology to enhance your marketing efforts

by Kimberly Wulfert

A virtual Disneyland of information and images can be delivered live through telecommunications and the Internet, connecting you with the public worldwide for little or no cost. These forms of communication can translate into significant savings on the time, travel, and money needed to market your teaching, quilts, and related products.

Your relationship with your customers is your most important selling tool. This factor, more than the price or the item offered, determines their decision to purchase from you. When someone likes you, they will want to buy what you have to offer, again and again.

Meeting new people and building a relationship through live teleseminars is the most personal use of social media. This isn't all that different from meeting the public at a quilt show or exhibit.

I interviewed Lisa Chipetine, host of two different teleconferences for quilters. One is a monthly mentorship call through SAQA University that started in 2007. More recently, she began a private business with Sandra Sider, critiquing artwork for art quilters, [www.quiltcritique.com](http://www.quiltcritique.com). When asked about the greatest benefit of this technology for fiber artists, Lisa said it's their "ability to bring together a diverse group of people from all over the globe to meet and share their knowledge at the same time. It's a virtual community emanating from diverse experiences and viewpoints." Through this collaborative interchange, quilt art and dialogue about the art forms can be shared without boundaries of any kind getting in the way of communication.

### Teleseminars and webcasts

Teleseminars deliver auditory information only, through your phone,

using a number connected to a conference line service. Your account has a unique conference code. You alone monitor the operations from the service's web site control panel. Most teleseminar services are free and can handle 100 or more live listeners. I use [www.freeconferencecalling.com](http://www.freeconferencecalling.com), which has 500 lines.

To broadcast a teleseminar through your listener's computer speakers, an added service provider is needed for the web simulcast, or "webcast." You send a link to the service's web site in advance, and your listener listens to the broadcast through Flash Player, Windows Media Player, Real Time, or Quick Time. Since your Internet listener cannot talk live with this form of teleseminar, they send questions and comments to you through a text box provided on the web page. You receive the questions on a control panel page. You can then read them aloud and answer.

A webcast is preferred by some people because it doesn't use listeners' minutes or incur phone charges. This is good to keep in mind if you want to reach a national or international audience. If you only offer a webcast, you as host still have to speak through a teleseminar service, so there is no reason not to offer both options.

There is a charge for webcast services. The fees start at around \$50 a month depending on the features you choose, and some services offer a per-use charge. Webcast services, such as Instant Teleseminar (<http://xiosoft.com/instantteleseminar/specialinfo.asp?x=0>), include a conference phone line or you can use your own service.

The person-to-person interaction this provides to potential customers anywhere on the globe is one of the key reasons to consider adding teleseminars and webcasts to your repertoire of marketing tools. You can offer your event for free or charge a

fee, depending on your content and purpose.

You can share marketing and widen your audience by getting involved in or hosting a telesummit. Elaine Quehl ([www.equarelle.ca](http://www.equarelle.ca)) participated in a telesummit on fiber art businesses. A telesummit is a gathering of people who present on a specific topic, through individual or panel teleseminars, over a period of days or weeks.

Elaine did the telesummit for the exposure to a wider audience and to increase opportunities for invitations to lecture and teach. A telesummit host puts together a special web page about the presenters with their pictures and their web site links. This page link is sent to the email lists of all of the presenters and to Twitter, Facebook, and blogs.

### Recording Your Presentation

Teleseminars can be used over and over in promoting your artwork. Nearly all teleseminar and webcast services can record your program for later playback by people who were not on the live call. You can email the replay link to potential clients and media sources. Placing a link to images in a PDF or webpage along with the link to the recording invites the virtual listener to have a detailed look at your work, products, and services. Services provide HTML for playback on a web site or blog or an MP3 download.

With instant replay in mind during the live broadcast, you can set the audience on mute while presenting your material to ensure a clear sound recording. To receive questions and interact with your audience, you can easily open the line later to everyone or to just one individual.

### Webinars add images

There are comprehensive webinar services such as GoToWebinar, Instant Teleseminar Webinar, and GoTo-Meeting.com, which is how SAQA's



mentorship teleseminars are provided to you. Adding visuals to a webcast through a webinar service shows the audience your computer monitor's desktop while you have control of the operation. You can show a PowerPoint presentation or any page on your web site. Audio comes over the Internet or through their phones. Generally, the audience maximum is lower and the cost somewhat higher than a webcast service.

Use webinars to give classes or lectures as if you were teaching at a guild. As a marketing effort, you can offer a discount on a purchase of your artwork by using a code you give to listeners on the call and directing them to your web site's shopping cart or registration page for a future class.

In 2008, I started *Women On Quilts*, [womenonquilts.blogspot.com](http://womenonquilts.blogspot.com), a blog to host tele-interviews, coaching women to seam together business and spirit in the creative arts. I paid for webcasting at first but when I decided to keep the interviews free of charge, something had to give. My webmaster switched us to AuthorPoint Lite ([www.authorgen.com/authorpoint](http://www.authorgen.com/authorpoint)). This software converts a PowerPoint presentation to a Flash-based one that I place on my web site. Listeners can access each page by clicking on a link during a live or recorded teleseminar.

Another service, [www.dimdim.com](http://www.dimdim.com), works with Windows Vista and offers whiteboards you can draw on for giving classes. From your desktop, you can show YouTube videos and PDFs. Your visual and auditory event can be recorded to replay in a browser by your listener.

Lisa found Camtasia software ([www.camtasia.com](http://www.camtasia.com)) useful for making a video from a webcast for playback later. It allows you to edit both pictures and sound. Check out Penny McMorris' class on portfolios in SAQA-U to see an example of this

feature in the mentorship archives.

### Marketing your Teleconference

Use your web site or blog as the platform to host an announcement or invitation to your tele-event. I use a dedicated blog to announce my monthly tele-interviews. The announcements are also distributed through an RSS feed into public media and subscriber's readers, along with an email subscriber list automatically handled by FeedBurner at no charge. You can also get RSS feeds through a Google account regardless of the blog format you use: TypePad, Blogger, WordPress, or your web site.

Rose Hughes ([www.rosehughes.com](http://www.rosehughes.com)) was my guest on a tele-interview on the *Women On Quilts* blog early on in my use of this medium. Pictures of her quilts, her book, and links to her web site were included in the announcement I posted. Rose sent the link to her email and Twitter lists, which got the word out about my blog to a new audience. It was a win-win situation for both of us.

I asked Rose about the benefits of this experience. She said, "As an artist and author, being interviewed is an important way to share information about myself and my work. New media opportunities abound, but one thing hasn't changed: it's important for me to market these appearances by any means available. Teleseminars and other programs like Kim's have truly helped contribute to making my first book, *Dream Landscapes*, successful."

Rose's publisher joined the audience the day of that teleseminar and then arranged another tele-interview with Rose hosted by their staff.

Asking people to register with their names and email addresses to receive the call-in details is an ideal way to grow your email list. If you don't want to host the announcements,

and registration on your own platform, there are online services that do it all. EventBrite.com will also take payments for your teleseminars through credit cards or by check. Their small fee is deducted, but if your teleseminar is free, the fee is waived.

### Precautions

Purchase a good quality headset with an attached and adjustable microphone. There's no need for a fancy setup when you're using the commercial services I've described here. I bought one made by GE that cost less than \$50, and it works quite well.

Be prepared for problems with transmission. Register with two services so you have a backup if one fails that day. I inform my listeners at the start of each interview not to hang up if my connection fails. I will call right back in and they can do the same if it happens on their line.

Lisa's top tip is to be aware of the wide variation in users' technology and experience. She recommends planning five minutes for how-to questions into your program. Offering an image-based tutorial (see [www.QuiltCritique.com](http://www.QuiltCritique.com)) or beginner's level instructions for participating in your process with Macs, PCs and various browsers helps to circumvent some of the inevitable questions people ask until they have successfully used your system of choice.

Teleseminars, webcasts, and webinars are now low-cost, easy-to-implement, far-reaching marketing tools that start and maintain relationships you have with collectors, buyers, and students around the world. ▼

*SAQA active member Kimberly Wulfert, PhD, is a psychologist, business coach, and quilter. She lives in Oak View, California. Her blog is [womenonquilts.blogspot.com](http://womenonquilts.blogspot.com).*

# Participating in a cooperative gallery

by Deborah Baldwin

**E**ach year since 2003, artists in Oak Park, Illinois have banded together to sell art during the holiday season. In 2006, I was asked to join “Out of The Box,” a cooperative gallery group that exhibits from the day after Thanksgiving until Christmas Eve. “Out of The Box” has 33 member artists, including six fiber artists.

As a participating artist, my responsibilities include my share of the rent, utilities, business license, insurance, postcards for advertising, postage, and supplies (bags, boxes and tissue paper, fabric for tables). I have to make an inventory list of my pieces, report my sales, and bring reception goodies. Each artwork’s price must include sales tax. Ten percent of the retail price goes to the management.

Each artist donates two days of service to help run the shop and work as a cashier. This is my favorite task, as I enjoy greeting the customers, answering questions from prospective buyers, and seeing what type of artwork is selling. We are there to sell all of the art, not just our own.

Since the wall space of the gallery is reserved for the founders, the first year I participated, I created scarves and quilted postcards. These items could be displayed on tables or hanging racks. The next year, I added reversible ponchos and eyeglass cases. For the 2008 season, I decided to have a mixture of low-priced things as well as my higher priced wearable art. My 2008 inventory consisted of fabric jewelry, quilted ornaments, bookmarks, eyeglass cases, wine bags, quilted gift boxes, scarves, ponchos/capes, and hand-dyed jackets.

My best sales were in 2006 and have declined since. Although this year I sold bookmarks, jewelry, one scarf, and one eyeglass case, I’ve realized that I can’t compete on price with crafters, knitters, and clothing designers.



*DigiLily* 40 x 43 inches ©2008 Deborah Baldwin

Next year I will be sticking with what I do best: making small quilts, mounting them on mat board, and placing them in a bin. I have found that unmatted postcards do not sell well. People find them too expensive to think about mailing them, and it takes too much explanation to tell them how to frame them themselves so they can display them on their walls.

If you are thinking of organizing a collective store, some preliminary items to consider are finding a place to rent, organizing the artists, setting up utilities, obtaining a business license and insurance, designing and printing postcards, and placing ads in the local newspapers. Other management duties include banking, paying bills, bookkeeping, scheduling store coverage, displaying the artwork, and reimbursing artists.

The first three years for “Out of The Box,” the site was a gallery in the Oak Park Arts District. According to founder Brenda Watkins, it was the best year for those selling fine art, while the only fiber artist in the

group had no sales. In the second year, there were three fiber artists, but only one had strong sales with hand-painted silk scarves. In year four, the store moved to a retail/restaurant area in downtown Oak Park. In 2008 it moved again to a business/restaurant district in Forest Park, a suburb just west of Oak Park. The size of the space was larger to accommodate the 33 artist members.

I have learned quite a bit from participating. The first lesson was that I’m in competition with the fiber artist who sells hand-painted silk scarves. When customers come in specifically looking for her wares, they see mine as well. My scarves, which are appliquéd and embellished, need to be obviously different from hers.

Second, I learned who the customers are and what items sell. I noted that lower-priced items, holiday-related gifts, and jewelry sell best, but there are occasional sales of higher-priced, more personal gift items.

My third lesson was in the area

See “Cooperative gallery” on page 32

# Fiber Artists Coalition

by Clairan Ferrono

A funny thing happened on my way to SAQA's 2007 *Breaking Boundaries* conference. I was fortunate to travel from Columbus to Athens, Ohio, with Martha Sielman, Susan Ferraro, and Gwyned Trefethen, all members of the SAQA Northeast regional group, Fiber Revolution. I had been following the group for some years and thinking that the time was right for a Midwest version. They allowed me to pick their brains, and at the conference there were many fine artists I could talk to about forming a new group.

Several people were enthusiastic, including Peg Keeney, Desi Vaughn, Kathie Briggs, Cheryl Ferrin, Casey Puetz, and Kasia. Over the next few months, emails went back and forth. Some of us met at the Fabrications retreat, and several more artists joined us: BJ Parady, Edna Patterson-Petty, Jacque Davis, Laura Wasilowski, Joan Potter Thomas, Pat Kroth, and Frieda Anderson.

Kathie Briggs set us up with a Yahoo® group and we started to get organized, collect dues, and assign duties. Each of us is responsible for finding venues and curating exhibits. We use our Yahoo group to state guidelines for shows and gather photographs. Each of us has a gallery of available work. We prefer our exhibits to travel, so work generally must be available for two years. However, it can sell and be replaced in an exhibit.

Fiber Artists Coalition (FAC) is a network of professional artists, all SAQA PAMs, dedicated to promoting innovative art quilts. FAC's goal is to increase the visibility of art quilts through exhibitions and sales specifically in galleries and museums. Our first exhibit, *Terra Suava*, opened at St. Petersburg College's Crossroads Gallery in conjunction with the Handweaver's Guild of America's Convergence 2008.

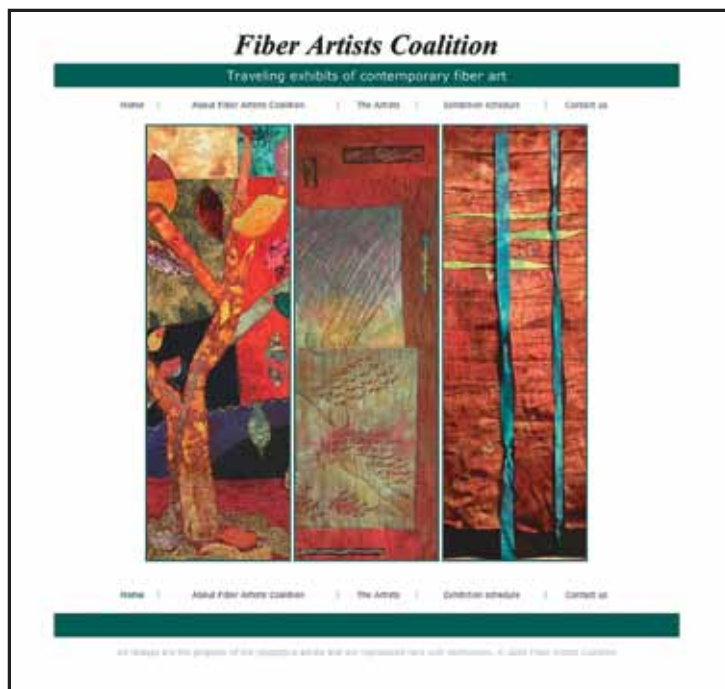
We also seek to exchange ideas and support one another. We have succeeded in doing this by setting up our FAC Salon, using Alyson B. Stanfield's ArtBiz Connection in a conference-call format, every other week. This gave FAC participants a common marketing base as well as encouragement to continue making work and seeking to exhibit it. We continue to use the scheduled conference calls to keep the group cohesive and on track. We also try to meet in person at least once a year.

Currently, we have several exhibitions in the mix: *Winds of Change* was exhibited at Gallery 50 in Traverse City, Michigan; *13 Ways of Looking at a Blackbird* opened in November 2009 at Governor French Gallery in Belleville, Illinois and will be at the Circle of Arts in Charlevoix, Michigan in July 2010, and *Simply Chicago*

Art, Evanston, Illinois in March 2011; *Midwest Meditations* will open at the Bloomingdale Park District Museum in Bloomingdale, Illinois in September 2010; and *Some Like It Hot* will be submitted to The Pump House Gallery in LaCrosse, Wisconsin.

It takes a lot of hard work and dedication to keep a group like this running smoothly, and we've experienced our share of bumps in the road, but I believe all of us feel it has been a good experience and worth the effort. We are all learning new skills, polishing our professionalism, and getting our work out there. Our web site is [www.fiberartistscoalition.com](http://www.fiberartistscoalition.com). ▼

*SAQA professional artist member Clairan Ferrono is a fiber artist. She lives in Chicago, Illinois and her web site is [www.fabric8tions.net](http://www.fabric8tions.net).*



Home page for the Fiber Artists Coalition



# Weaving women together

## The birth of Tammachat

by Alleson Kase

There's nothing quite like the sensuous surface of hand-reeled silk. Its slubs add depth. Its sheen adds warmth. "When it's handwoven, you can see the hand of the maker in the silk," says Jamie Pratt, a quilt artist from Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Add to this the subtle golden color from coconut husks or the sky blue from the flowers of the butterfly pea and you have extraordinary fabrics—art in themselves.

When you take this fabric and transform it into a new piece of art—an art quilt—you can see the hands of many makers in the finished piece. And the making of this art has a richness that goes far beyond each of those makers—a fusion of traditions and contemporary creativity, a way to weave women together.

I have admired women's weavings since my first visit to Guatemala 30 years ago. In the intervening decades,

I've learned that handwoven cloth is an important source of income for many rural women in the developing world, a vital part of what sustains them, their families and their communities, while preserving their cultural heritage.

Several years ago, my friend Ellen Agger and I visited PraePan, a women's weaving co-op in Khon Kaen, Thailand. PraePan's members, like other women in northeast Thailand and much of Laos, weave in their homes on foot-treadle floor looms made from hardwood and bamboo. Without metal heddles, the warp yarns are usually raised with patterning strings and/or bamboo strips. The weft yarns are thrown by hand in a slender "boat" shuttle, carved from local hardwood, stained dark and worn smooth by years of use.

Before warps are strung or bobbins filled, women spend months

preparing the yarns. Many raise silkworms, boil cocoons and reel silk threads. Some spin their own cotton, after removing the seeds and fluffing the boll into a cloud of fiber. Almost all dye their own yarns, using natural materials they have grown or gathered close to their homes.

The women distill a wonderful array of nature's colors from leaves, husks, wood chips, barks, berries, fruits, and flowers. Slate blues, peony pinks, herbal greens, and spicy browns—all the colors seem to have a third dimension not captured on a color chart and rarely duplicated.

Many tie-dye the yarns before weaving with a traditional technique that they call *mudmee*, and which we in the West usually refer to as *ikat*.<sup>1</sup> When the *mudmee* yarns are woven, an elaborate geometric pattern emerges. If the artist is especially expert as well as diligent, the pattern can continue for 20 meters.

During a village visit, we saw that their artistry is matched by their practicality. They have adopted fuel-efficient stoves for their dye pots and abandoned heavy-metal mordants that pollute village streams. Membership in the co-op gives women access to training and appropriate technologies from local rural development groups. These let them improve their products and decrease their costs, while they protect their health and the health of their communities.

Members sell their weaving to the group, receiving payment when pieces are finished rather than when they're sold to a customer. During our first visit, however, we learned that



Raising silkworms in Khon Kaen, Thailand

All Photos by Ellen Agger





Mudmee tying process; threads after dyeing

PraePan had been forced to decline recent requests for new membership because their members were already creating more products than the co-op was selling. On the spot, we decided to buy a portion of the group’s inventory to bring home to Nova Scotia.

**Weaving international links**

We realized that a one-time purchase wasn’t going to address PraePan’s marketing problem, so the next year we returned to discuss possible strategies that might lead to a long-term increase in sales. Our first suggestion was to connect them to the Internet as well as develop a web site and shopping cart for them. In dialogue with PraePan staff, we came to understand how impractical this was: the women don’t read or write English, so they couldn’t respond to email inquiries that a web site would generate.

More crucial is the fact that there are more than 70 million web sites and millions of online shopping carts. Customers must be brought to web sites, and given the competitive nature of online marketing, they must also be convinced that artistry,

fair trade, and environmental stewardship override other concerns of price, availability, and selection. This task is a formidable one that would leave weavers no time to weave, even if they had the skill and resources to take it on.

Consequently, we formed a social enterprise to market their artwork. We call it TAMMACHAT, which is Thai for “natural.” Each year we travel to Thailand and Laos to visit

PraePan and similar groups of village weavers whom we met through their networks. We support these artisans and their communities by choosing quality pieces produced with environmentally and socially sustainable practices, by paying fair prices set by the artisan groups themselves, and by returning to the same groups each year with the intent of increasing their income stability through long-term trading relationships.



Dye experiments





Some of our customers care about these factors as much as we do; others only need to see the unique beauty of the textiles to appreciate them. Either way, the makers and their methods of production are supported and encouraged. Fiber artists of all sorts are the most appreciative of our message and these products. Who would better understand the intricate ways that fibers weave us all together?

### Un-natural fibers

Silk, cotton and bamboo are all “natural” fibers but they’re seldom produced naturally. Most silk is produced in factories that rely on heavy doses of toxic sanitizers and, consequently, are unhealthy workplaces.<sup>2</sup> Most cotton is grown with large inputs of chemical fertilizers, insecticides, herbicides, and unsustainable quantities of irrigation, so much so that an entire sea has been drained dry to produce “affordable” cotton clothing.<sup>3</sup> Bamboo, the latest green-washed fiber, grows quickly and naturally in the wild but is an extruded yarn produced by an industrial chemical process with toxic effluents like most other rayon.<sup>4</sup>

The weaving groups we work with create silk fabrics that are 100% organic: the silk they weave is raised and reeled in villages, the mulberry leaves fed to the silkworms are free from pesticides, and their remarkably dynamic colors are created with

natural dyes that are wild-crafted or organically raised.

These weavers live in areas too dry to support cotton production without irrigation, which they don’t have. This means that, while they do their own dyeing, they usually purchase their cotton yarns. On the other hand, we spent two weeks last year with a group that grows heritage varieties of cotton on the banks of the Mekong River without toxic chemicals or unsustainable irrigation. Together we designed two indigo cotton jackets and a line of decorative pillows. This year we will return there, as well as look for more organic cotton production on the Lao side of the Mekong.

### Joint projects

Because quilting is not a traditional style of handwork in this part of Thailand, we initially had some trouble explaining to Thai weavers how their silks might be used by fiber artists in the West. Knowing that a “picture is worth a thousand words,” we went online with the technology of a cell phone and a laptop computer to introduce staff members of another weaving co-op, PanMai, to the artwork of SAQA members Laurie Swim and Valerie Hearder—women we know in Nova Scotia who are also internationally known quilt artists, authors, and instructors.

With that shared understanding, and the weavers’ help and artistic

advice, we have produced a unique line of silk squares in four different palettes—each package contains one mudmee design and four solid colors. The initial idea came from Val Hearder, who suggested that we might want to bring silk squares to the bi-annual Quilt Canada conference. Three months later, we did just that and found that Val was right.

During our next visit, we’ll discuss with these groups the growing demand in the West for ethically-sourced clothing and share the good news that their extraordinary silk scarves and fabrics are now eco-fashionable.

We hope that increased public awareness of the enormous impact textile production has on people and the planet will prompt consumers to embrace these “slow fashions” as they have “slow food.” We hope that groups like PraePan and PanMai can hang on a little longer while the world catches up to their traditional ways, so that they can better sustain what they’ve learned from their grandmothers and are now preserving for their granddaughters. ▼

*Alleson Kase and Ellen Agger live most of the year in Nova Scotia, Canada. Together they have created TAMMACHAT Natural Textiles, a social enterprise that imports handwoven silks and cottons from Thailand and Laos. They market these at fair trade textile events that they create, as well as online at [www.tammachat.com](http://www.tammachat.com).*

1. Described in a travelogue by Karen Maru in *SAQA Journal*, Spring 2008
2. Chlorine, formalin, lime and anti-fungus drugs are used to reduce disease among intensively raised hybrid silkworms. Many women find that they are allergic, or worse, to these chemicals. Symptoms include headaches, eye pain, nausea, vomiting, fatigue, fainting, dyspnoea, coughing, numbness, skin rashes, itching and eye swelling. From “Gender and Natural Resource Management: Livelihoods, Mobility and Interventions” [http://www.idrc.ca/fr/ev-126259-201-1-DO\\_TOPIC.html](http://www.idrc.ca/fr/ev-126259-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html)
3. “Disappearance of the Aral Sea” *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation*, May 01, 2006.
4. “Guidance on Labelling Textile Articles Derived from Bamboo,” Competition Bureau of Canada, <http://www.competitionbureau.gc.ca/eic/site/cb-bc.nsf/eng/03021.html>



***Pink Leaf***

©2009 Pat Pauly  
37 x 41 inches

## On the Cover:

Inspired by a Panamanian *mola*, *Pink Leaf* captures Pat Pauly's fascination with abstracting natural elements. Using both commercial and hand-worked textiles, this work focuses on the mola's inherent line work.

A textile artist since 1981, Pat shows her work nationally as well as curates and designs exhibitions of contemporary and historic textiles. Known for her improvisational technique, Pat Pauly uses bold color and unusual juxtapositions of printed and painted fabric. Her lectures and workshops on contemporary art quilts carry the same qualities as her work: energetic, spontaneous, and definitive. She maintains a studio near Rochester, New York.

## 2010 SAQA organizational structure

*Volunteer board members are listed on the SAQA web site*

### **Paid full-time staff**

Martha Sielman — Executive Director

### **Paid part-time staff:**

Deidre Adams — Art Director  
Eileen Doughty — Website Coordinator  
Cheryl Dineen Ferrin — Marketing Director  
Pat Gould — Asst. Executive Director  
Rita Hannafin — Traveling Exhibitions Coordinator  
Allison Reker — Membership Secretary  
Katie Shaiken, Jenny Easow — Clerical Assistants  
Carolyn Lee Vehslage — Journal Editor

### **Volunteer staff**

*Volunteer regional reps are listed on the SAQA web site*

Thelma Smith — Visioning Project Assistant  
Liz DeBellis — Social Networking Coordinator  
Cathy Kleeman, Jen Solon, Catherine Pascal, Sue Bleiweiss,  
Joy Loesch — Website/SAQA-U Assistants  
Cynthia Wenslow — Website Calendar Coordinator

### **Committees**

#### **Denver 2011 Conference Planning Committee:**

Sandra Sider (Chair), Linda Abrams, Christi Beckmann,  
Regina Benson, Lisa Chipetine, Pat Gould, Peg Keeney,  
Carol Ann Waugh

#### **Executive Committee:**

Lisa Chipetine (President), Sandra Sider (Vice President),  
Penny McMorris (Secretary), Nelda Warkentin (Treasurer)

#### **Exhibition Committee:**

Peg Keeney (Chair), Karey Bresenhan, Gregory Case,  
Linda Colsh, Judith Content, Rita Hannafin, Gigi Kandler,  
Kate Lenkowsky, Kathy Lichtendahl

#### **Finance Committee:**

Nelda Warkentin (Chair), Pokey Bolton, Jack Walsh

#### **Fundraising Committee:**

Sandra Sider (Chair), Regina Benson, Judith Content,  
Dianna Grundhauser, Mary Pal, Nelda Warkentin

#### **Nominating Committee:**

Penny McMorris (Chair), Pokey Bolton, Eileen Doughty

#### **PAM Review Committee:**

Deidre Adams, Anna Hergert, Barb McKie



# Growing a contemporary quilt collection

by Suzanne Smith Arney

“What is a quilt?” is the question that Del Thomas, quilter, collector, and sometime provocateur, loves to ask of her audiences. You feel confident of the answer until Thomas displays *Discombobulated* (2001) by Jill Rumoshosky Werner. The encounter might leave you feeling, well, discombobulated. The colorful quilt is 2 inches wide by 9½ yards long. Thomas describes the quilt this way: “It’s made of cotton fabric, has a cotton batting, is machine quilted and bound (with a hand-stitched finished edge). One can lay it on a bed, hang it on a wall, wrap it around a person, or pile it up on a table. So, why would it not be a quilt?”

It’s this sense of surprise and hard-won appreciation for contemporary studio art quilts that Thomas enjoys winning from her audiences. It’s an awakening she experienced herself. Having quilted all her life, Thomas remembers feeling “appalled” when she first encountered avant-garde quilts. But, she says, “The more I looked at them, at the techniques, the more I admired them.”

A favorite quilter is Ruth B. McDowell—there are now 18 McDowell quilts in Thomas’ collection. Thomas had initially read about McDowell in a *Quilters Newsletter* article by Nancy Halpern, then looked for her quilts in publications and “in-the-fabric.” In 1992 she took her first of many classes from McDowell. During one class, McDowell showed *Conversation on a Porch* (1993). “It was even more amazing to me than any of her quilts I had seen up to that time, so I asked her if it was for sale and wrote the check. It is still one of my favorite quilts.”

The Thomas Contemporary Quilt Collection has grown to include about 160 quilts. “I bought one, then another,” she says simply. When she decided to collect, she limited herself to a single focus: quilts. However, it’s a truly idiosyncratic selection. Neither a quilt library documenting a certain time, artist, or type, nor an investment decision, each choice is based on personal response. Thomas said it succinctly in a 2005 interview with Kate Lenkowsky: “For me, collecting is about the promotion of the art

quilts, assistance to the women artists and my personal pleasure of living with wonderful quilts on my walls.” She prefers buying quilts through personal contact with the artist and will go to great lengths at times to find them. “I found many quilters by just asking other quilters and quilt teachers for contacts. It’s so much easier now with Google!” Thomas enjoys getting to know the artists—following their careers, learning to recognize signatures, and sometimes taking classes from them. She respects the role of galleries, however, and if the quilt was first seen there she pays the gallery percentage even when buying directly from the artist.

Buying quilts by appeal rather than a checklist, Thomas follows her heart and her instincts. But these guidelines have been honed by a lifetime of quilting and ongoing education—reading, classes, talking and listening, organization and guild memberships, and looking—always looking. She lives with her quilts, looks at them, studies and thinks about them, values them. “It is important to me that the quilts be seen by many people,” she says. She demonstrates this belief by hanging pieces from TCQC in others’ homes, writing a weekly blog ([www.delquilts.blogspot.com](http://www.delquilts.blogspot.com)), and making loans to galleries and museums. She has discovered she has a gift for teaching. “It’s something important that I can do,” she says, “and it’s one of the most satisfying things I’ve done in my life.”

Thomas had learned to quilt from her grandmother when she was seven, but didn’t really indulge her interest until she retired in the mid-1970s. She quilted and collected antique quilts “in a desultory way” for about ten



**Fort Morrison Jerseys**

46 x 65 inches ©2003 Ruth B. McDowell



Above: **Gathering Storm** 26 x 44 inches ©2006 Elizabeth Barton

Right: **Early Birds** 38 x 49 inches ©2005 Ruth Powers



years. "In 1985, I purchased a quilt by Judy Mathieson at a guild live auction. Although it's a traditional design (straight-furrow log cabin) it's made of raw silk in lovely colors. I consider that my first contemporary quilt purchase." Her immersion in the contemporary quilt scene has had a freeing effect on her own work. Always receptive to technique, she creates her own designs and does hand piecing, sometimes using colored pencil or printer-generated images, and machine quilting. A self-portrait, *Calm in Chaos*, was done in 2005.

One recent trend she views warily is embellishment. The beads and other accoutrements tend to catch or otherwise threaten the fabric, and the quilts are a problem to store. Thomas purchased *The Cherry Picker* by Pamela Allen (2005) in an online auction without fully comprehending the artificial cherries and leaves. Thomas now refers to it as "one of the most fascinating quilts in the TCQC," has added other Allen quilts, and taken a class from the artist. When asked to designate a quilt which especially caught her attention, she names Allen's *Nice Catch* (2007), purchased from a SAQA online auction. "Pam has an unpolished style that really surprises me."

Thomas is also attracted to the unusual techniques of Linda Colsh, who uses photographic imagery, dye, and paint to create conceptual narratives on cloth. "I like the way she

combines things," says Thomas. "*Ewe Alone* (2007) is a very appealing quilt. That lone sheep makes me wonder." Libby Lehman's *Silent Partners* (1995) also demanded attention, which Thomas described in her blog on May 31, 2008: "I took it home, hung it on the wall, and stared at it for a long time before I could go to sleep...It is just a one-patch quilt made with hand-dyed fabrics. But Libby has stitched over the background patches so that it appears to be a pattern on point. However, all the patches are set square and the stitching, using rayon threads, is superimposed over them. Some of the stitching was done just on the top and some goes through the top/batting/backing." In one of the programs she developed, Thomas compared Lehman's contemporary approach to one of her antique quilts, a one-patch from the late 1800s.

Thomas can't stress enough the necessity of building business skills while educating oneself about quilts. She has learned computer necessities: Microsoft Publisher and other software, data entry, digital imagery, etc. She's learned about taxes, appraisals, contracts and insurance, hanging and rotation, storing, and transporting quilts. Storage, for example, is one thing she didn't consider when beginning her collection. "Quilts should be kept in acid-free boxes. Who has room for 160 acid-free boxes? I had to come up with my own system." In fact, she has just spent a year, with

the help of a friend, rearranging her house and converting the living and dining rooms into her work room.

Other suggestions for collectors? "Train your eye to see good workmanship and artistic design." Take advantage of live or online programs and resources for collectors, such as The San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles' annual Art of Collecting symposia, and SAQA's Collectors' Corner.

Returning to *Calm in Chaos*, we see that it reflects its owner. Imagine it hung in Thomas' "prime spot" with a mirror opposite. Despite a chaotic list of things to do, she takes a few moments to assess her work. She has finished the quilt with choice bits from the tumult of her scrap stash and now surveys the results unhurriedly, arms crossed, head slightly tilted. There are her signature birds, found in every quilt she makes. Its size, 24 x 32 inches, follows her self-determined ideal of fitting quilts into finite budget and storage allowances. A sense of calm settles as we trace its essential art elements and technical threads. A satisfied sigh is exhaled before the Santa Ana winds of schedules sweep away the spell. Del Thomas has an opening to attend, artists to meet, and perhaps a new acquisition to bring home. ▼

*Suzanne Smith Arney is a writer and arts educator in Omaha, Nebraska.*



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## Jane Dávila

from page 16

other artists on projects is always invigorating.

Being married to an artist is perfect for both of us. There's always someone available for critique and advice, or for encouragement or commiseration. Carlos makes large-scale abstract oil paintings and wood-and-metal wall assemblages and sculptures. We balance each other well, although there is fierce competition for wall space in our house. We have separate studios (fiber, paper, wood dust, and oil paint don't always play so well together) but we pool our resources and support each other. It's really wonderful not to need to explain why you have to follow your muse at 3 am. ▼

SAQA professional artist Jane Dávila is a fiber artist living in Ridgefield, Connecticut. Her web site is [www.janedavila.com](http://www.janedavila.com) and her blog is [janedavila.blogspot.com](http://janedavila.blogspot.com).

**The Winner's Secret**  
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# Pain

from page 17

with your left knee up. Keeping your chest tall, rock your body forward by bending your left knee. This will create a stretch on the right leg, opening



up the front of your hip. Repeat on the other side. Opening the front of your hip will create a greater range of movement for your glutes and lower back.

Another good way to stretch your psoas muscles is to lie on your back and bend your left leg into your chest. Your right leg should be slightly bent, foot flat on the floor, so your leg forms a V shape, bent at the knee. Pressing the left knee firmly to your chest, slowly straighten your right leg on the floor. Continue the stretch on both sides, in sets of five.

After you spend about two minutes stretching each leg, you need to do an exercise that will strengthen the back of your hips. Try a basic exercise like the prisoner squat to get the job done. Put your hands behind your head and just squat down. Make sure you stand tall and squeeze your glutes on every repetition. These simple techniques may be used to

help restore good motion to your hips and low back.

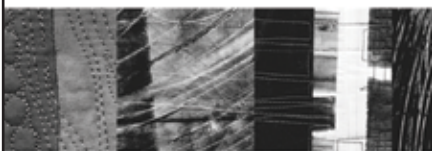
Please be aware that exercise is not without its risks, and this or any other exercise program may result in injury. To reduce the risk of injury, please consult your physician before trying these techniques. The exercise instruction and advice presented here are in no way intended as a substitute for medical consultation.

May you be pain-free in your pursuit of your artwork! ▼

*Chris Pepe started in the fitness industry ten years ago as a personal trainer and fitness director at a facility in northern New Jersey. Chris uses his knowledge and experience to develop programs for athletes and people suffering from chronic pain and injuries. He is the founder of Integrated Fitness Systems, [www.IFSPT.com](http://www.IFSPT.com).*

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## Cooperative gallery

from page 22

of advertising. Not only did I have business cards at the cashier counter, but I distributed postcards at the dentist's office, to people I ran into at the grocery store, to family, friends, and my neighbors. If I didn't promote the store, I had to depend on random passersby or returning shoppers from previous years. We have a guest book at the counter so that we can gather addresses to send out postcards announcing our location, days, and hours.

For 2008, Brenda said that sales had more than doubled compared to the previous year. The top-selling art items were felted pins, fingerless gloves, ornaments, fused glass, jewelry, paintings, prints, and cards.

Brenda's advice for starting your own one-month, once-a-year sale is

to begin by finding an empty retail space a few months ahead of time. Not all landlords are willing to rent for just one month. Know how many artists are willing to participate and willing to share the costs involved. Start with artists you know and then add others they recommend. Be prepared to invest a lot of time and to organize who has which responsibilities.

All in all, I believe that being a part of "Out of The Box" was worth it, not just in terms of sales, but also the experience and the exposure of my artwork to the general public. ▼

SAQA professional artist member Deborah Baldwin lives in Oak Park, Illinois. Her web site is [www.debbaldwindesigns.com](http://www.debbaldwindesigns.com).

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## 10 Secrets

from page 13

### 10. Build your brand.

Every product is a brand. You, the artist, need to be a brand. When people know a brand and what that brand stands for, over time they develop trust. Trust often equals a purchase. You trust McDonald's for consistent food anywhere in the world. Though this goes along with visibility, find ways to reinforce the things you think people need to know or remember about your artwork. "Jill's paintings are ..." or "Bob's photographs are ..." Advertising and publicity can build your brand, but it's best if you control the way the brand is perceived.

You can also do branding with Facebook, Twitter, blogs, etc. Be careful to build the brand in a positive way. For instance, if every Facebook entry shows you with a bottle of absinthe in your hand, it may send the wrong signal (or the right one,

if you feel the bad-boy, Van Gogh approach is your image). Start with what you want your image to be, and find ways to reinforce that focus.

### The harsh reality of recession.

True, fewer artworks are selling, yet every day I hear reports of artwork sold at all price levels. Guess who's selling the artwork that's being purchased? It is the artist who is working to remain visible. Most artists shrink back during tough times, when they should be working harder to be seen.

Yes, it takes guts. Yes, it's hard work. Yes, there is risk. But consider the alternatives. The rewards are worth it.

Make up your mind to make a plan, stick with it, and be accountable to it. ▼

*B. Eric Rhoads is an art publisher and marketing expert. His blog is [ericrhoads.blogs.com](http://ericrhoads.blogs.com). This article originally appeared in his *Fine Art Connoisseur e-newsletter*, [www.fineartconnoisseur.com](http://www.fineartconnoisseur.com)*

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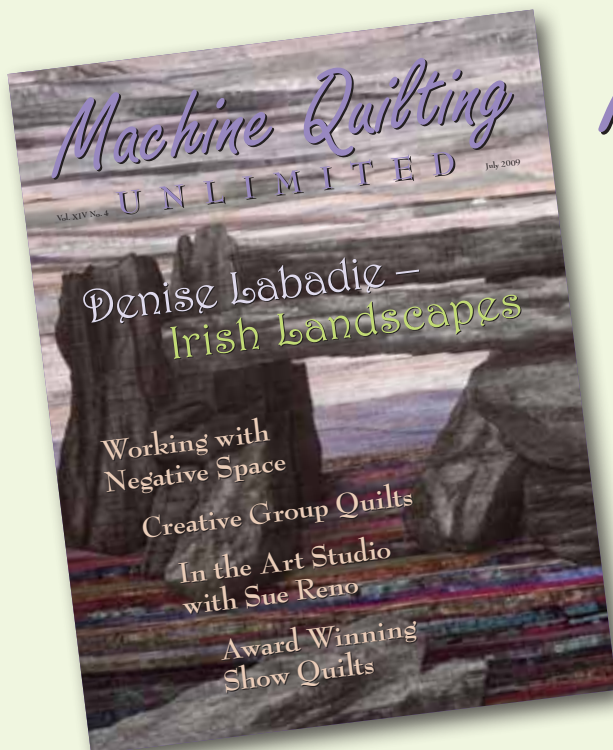


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# Meet your regional representatives

## Anna M. Davison

Eastern Canada co-representative  
[www.annaquilts.com](http://www.annaquilts.com)



Back in the 70s, there were no rotary cutters or mats, no libraries of quilting magazines, no quilting guilds in Nova Scotia, no fabric stores, and certainly not the

grand array of fabrics and patterns that are sold now. My quilting adventure began with a simple line-drawing of a boat for one of my boys. As more children came, my horizons expanded to appliqué and hand-piecing. I delighted in hand quilting them all.

Although I have ventured into various needlework endeavors, I always come back to quilting. I earned pocket money by selling my quilts, quilted clothing, and home décor items at craft markets, teaching workshops, and through commissions.

Teaching brings great satisfaction when I see the 'light' come on in the eyes of someone looking at my art—when someone "gets" the technique or understands the pattern. In 1991, I was co-founder of our local guild. In 2004, I followed my dream of working at quilting by making it my business.

Though I've designed many quilts during the past thirty-five years, there has been no definitive line between traditional quilts and art quilts. Three years ago, I learned about SAQA, worked the SAQA table at the Creativ-Festival in Toronto, and am now hooked on art quilts.

My very special Women's Work Project was inspired by my desire to focus on that topic, the value we give to our families and communities, and the impact women have in all we do. It was an 18-month labor of love which inaugurated on International Women's Day, March 8, 2008,



**The Arts** 30 x 31 inches ©2008 Anna M. Davison

in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The visual feast has 25 quilted wall hangings and textiles, a slide show of women's stories, inspirational quotes, and a theme song. This project has become my trunk show and is available wherever I teach or as a stand-alone presentation. My goal is to make and exhibit as many art quilts as time and opportunity allow, while keeping my hand in teaching and promoting the Women's Work Project.

## Frieda Anderson

Illinois and Wisconsin co-representative  
[www.friestyle.com](http://www.friestyle.com)



I made my first quilt when I was in high school. I have always made crafts and love the process of creating. In college I majored in art history and minored in ceramics, but eventually I returned to

fiber because it was more satisfying. I cannot remember when I wasn't sewing. For years my focus was designing and making clothing. In 1992 I was in fashion design, but I realized that all I really wanted to do was make quilts. I've been designing and making original quilts ever since.

I find each step of quilt making, from beginning to end, a real challenge, and it's hard to say which part I like best. I love the pure creativity involved in conceiving and designing a new quilt. I love to piece and fuse. Fusing smaller pieces helps me work out design issues. Then I like to make a bigger, bolder statement and piece the same quilt in a larger format. Most of my work is inspired by nature. What I see on my daily walks through a little woods near my home often appears in my work.

I discovered hand-dyeing fabric 17 years ago, and now my work is almost exclusively made with my own dyed cottons and silks. I love the dye process and particularly enjoy seeing the colors emerge from the wet fabric.

## Marianne R. Williamson

Florida and Georgia co-representative  
[www.leapingdeerranch.com](http://www.leapingdeerranch.com)



I grew up in Switzerland and graduated from the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Geneva in 1966. I taught art in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania for a year, then moved

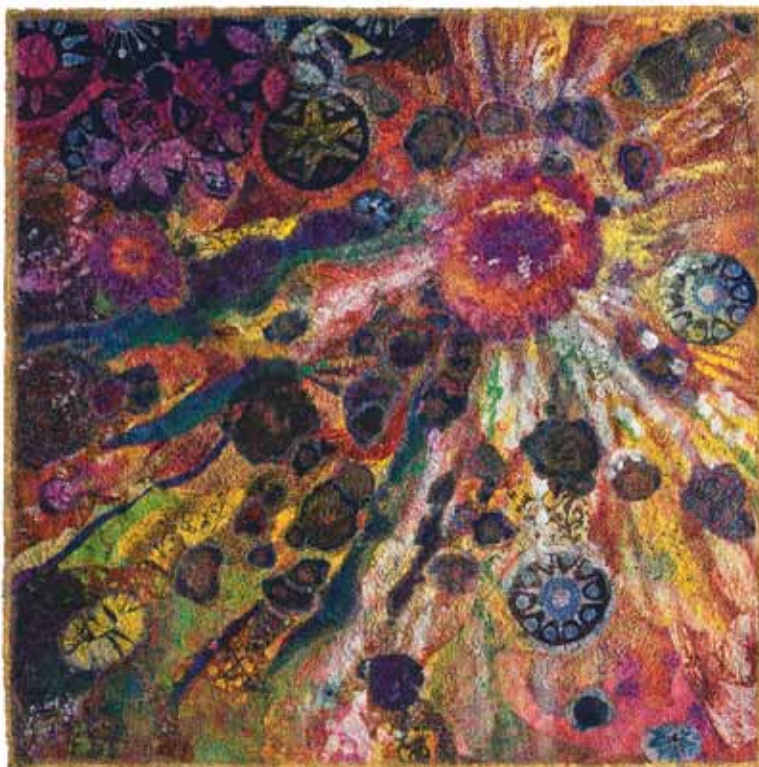
to New York and continued to teach. My paintings on batik fabric sold all over the eastern seaboard.

My love for quilting started in 1980 while I was living in Florida. I moved around the country and eventually opened an alpaca ranch in New Mexico. While there, I joined SAQA. In 2008, I moved back to Miami to be near family and my textile art became the center of my life. In the last 10 years my work has evolved to the point where I free-motion quilt and thread-paint extensively. It incorporates textile paint, dyes, thread, ribbon, felt, beads, rhinestones, and anything else I can either sew or glue on.

My inspiration comes from light and movement. Over time my themes have become more abstract, such as close-ups of water or dappled shade. In addition, the incredible images from the Hubble telescope have stirred my imagination. The immensity of outer space makes all earthbound problems seem very small. My mind may be in outer space, but when my three Havanese dogs become tired of seeing me at my sewing machine, they let me know that enough is enough!



**Winter Forest** 27 x 34 inches ©Frieda Anderson



courtesy of lady images

**Explosion** 36 x 35 inches ©2009 Marianne R. Williamson





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

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

### Deadlines for articles:

Summer: February 1

Fall: May 1

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