

# SAQA *Journal*

Studio Art Quilt Associates, Inc.



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photo by Andy Payne

## **Short Poppies Are Valuable Too**

54 x 39 inches

by Alison Muir

see page 37

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# Thoughts from the president

by Lisa Chipetine



**H**istory does repeat itself, even in the realm of technology. Let's think about the history of communication: first there were

newspapers, then radio, and ultimately, television. In today's world, instead of information being offered in each separate medium, they are being offered in one centralized area: the Internet.

We started with static websites, where you could view two-dimensional pictures. Then it evolved to podcasts where you could listen to interviews. Now the Internet is offering the ultimate broadcast experience: video. This medium of communication offers limitless opportunities to today's artists. You can:

- Engage the public in your artwork, vision, and process
- Market yourself at a fraction of the cost of print advertising
- Immediately publish new works via visual press releases
- Educate aspiring students with how-to's or show-and-tell
- Make your portfolio an "experience" for your blog or website
- Create a historical visual reference of your journey as an artist
- Promote your business with self-produced commercials

I am committed to providing the SAQA membership with cutting-edge opportunities; now I am pleased to announce that SAQA has been approved for a non-profit channel on YouTube: [www.saqachannel.com](http://www.saqachannel.com).

This is *your* channel and it is a free benefit for all SAQA members. If you have a video of you or your work at an exhibition, or if you create your own video of your artwork or processes, you now have the opportunity to educate the public at large and promote yourself on the SAQA channel.

So get spiffy'd up, practice your artist statement in the bathroom mirror, and have your BFF (Best Friend Forever) film you next to one of your pieces. Shout out and we will give you access to publish on SAQA's 24/7 television station: the SAQA channel!

It's important to remember that people go to the Internet for two things: for information and to be entertained. Let's give them both.

Got quilts? Get videos!

## Board report

by Linda Colsh, secretary



**A**s always in the Fall, the SAQA board says goodbye to some and hello to others. This year, Penny McMorris steps down after ser-

vice on many projects and committees, and perhaps most importantly, as secretary for the board for the past five years. With two vacancies on the

board in 2010 (earlier in the year, Dr. Carolyn Mazloomi stepped down due to time constraints), we start the new board year welcoming two new members: former Northern California co-representative Kris Sazaki (see profile on page 4) and Snyderman Gallery director Bruce Hoffman (profile coming in the next issue of *SAQA Journal*). Kris is well-known to SAQA members not only for representing Northern California, but also for being half of the team curating the 2011-2012

trunk show *This is a Quilt!* (The other half of the Pixeladies and trunk show curatorial team, Deb Cashatt, is now on the exhibition committee.) Bruce recently curated the 7th International Fiber Biennial in Philadelphia. Welcome new board members, and thank you to the nominating committee for recruiting new members from two of SAQA's communities: the membership and the gallery world.

In March, the board met in person at San Francisco State University just



# Report from the SAQA executive director

by Martha Sielman



**T**he SAQA exhibition committee is working on a five-year plan to create a road map for exhibition goals and policies through 2015.

As part of the process, they're sending out a survey to all members. The survey explores which SAQA exhibitions you've participated in already, along with what types of exhibitions you would be interested in pursuing in the future.

Another part of the process for drawing up a long-range plan is to review what the committee has achieved since it was formed in 2006. It's quite an impressive list: SAQA has sponsored and traveled 27 exhibitions in the last five years, an average of slightly more than five new exhibitions each year. What's also impressive is the wide range of places where the exhibitions have been displayed. We're all aware of the wonderful exposure SAQA exhibitions

have received by being seen by over 100,000 visitors each year at the International Quilt Festivals. But there's also a huge variety of other venues that SAQA exhibitions travel to, including 20 fine art venues: 7 fine art museums, 5 fine art galleries, and 8 fine art centers. SAQA exhibitions were also shown at two university art galleries, three quilt museums, and one art quilt gallery, as well as four municipal buildings and one corporate gallery space. In addition, SAQA exhibitions were shown at 15 different major quilt festivals in the U.S. and quilt festivals in Australia, Canada (2), England, France (2), and South Africa. Details are available on the website.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Karey Bresenhan and Vicki Mangum, whose labors at Quilts, Inc. helped to make this exhibition growth possible. Not only has Quilts, Inc. displayed SAQA exhibitions each year, but they have also stored all of SAQA's exhibitions, both those being displayed at IQF and those being displayed elsewhere. They

have packaged them, shipped them, processed all the paperwork, and returned them safely to each of you at the end of the exhibition's run. At the end of this year, SAQA will start doing our own storage and shipping, but we could never have achieved this level of exhibition success without their expert guidance and assistance in our early years.

Finally, I would like to encourage all of you to think about what types of exhibitions you like to view, what types of exhibitions you'd like to participate in, and then to let the exhibition committee know. The committee is always looking for new ideas. Member suggestions and requests led to *Fibrations*, an exhibition of smaller works, *Art Meets Science*, an exhibition of work influenced by science, and *No Place to Call Home*, part of a curatorial training program for SAQA members. Your suggestion could spark the next great idea for a successful SAQA exhibition!

before the SDA/SAQA *Reinvention Conference*. As the first of a series of planned informational presentations, Cheryl Dineen Ferrin gave the board a comprehensive look at SAQA's marketing. To assist the evaluation of SAQA's marketing efforts, Cheryl has requested that members who see SAQA mentioned in the media pass the reference on to her.

It was good to meet so many of you in San Francisco at *Reinvention*. For those who didn't get to the

conference in March, Martha Sielman wrote a review of all the conference events, panels, and speakers in the April 2010 e.Bulletin. The variety of speakers and subjects and the lively panels of presenters from so many interesting backgrounds (art students and professors, magazine editors, artists, and museum curators) provided much food for thought and discussion.

Planning is already well underway for *Visioning*, our next SAQA

conference to be held in Denver, Colorado, May 20-21, 2011. The day before official conference kickoff, a networking session and reception are planned. For details of the workshops, panels, keynotes, speakers, and other conference news, watch the SAQA e.Bulletins and the SAQA website.

# Meet your new board member: Kris Sazaki



It's been a strange trip from my first quilt (age 17) to my second (age 22), and then to my third quilt (age

46!), but the journey has landed me happily on the board of SAQA. My love of fiber comes from dancing in local festivals, dressed in kimonos. Once I got past the torture of having my life's breath squeezed out of me by the *obi* belt, I remember reveling in the different types, designs, and colors of the costumes. This love of fiber has stayed with me always, from learning to knit and sew clothes to

making my son's Halloween costumes. It also influenced my study of art when I was earning my degrees in German.

When I left academia (okay, when I returned to California with my tail between my legs), I had a golden opportunity to follow another one of my passions: creating art. I started collaborating with Deb Cashatt, and we've been creating art and printing fabric as the Pixeladies since 2003. Deb was the one who found SAQA and said we needed to join, and I'm so glad we did. We immediately found in SAQA a home filled with encouraging members willing to mentor and guide our progress. Deb and I have been serving as Northern

California/Nevada regional representatives since 2008, and we both look forward to staying active in SAQA.

I hope my diverse experiences will help me bring a valued perspective to the board. I am sure my organizational skills and committee work will serve me well. (Whether or not writing those pre-med recommendations will come in handy at SAQA remains to be seen.) I taught for over twenty years and was able to travel the world doing so. That is why I am proud of SAQA's international footprint and want to help broaden its appeal throughout the world. To that end I offer my services in German, un poco Spanish, and an embarrassingly small amount of children's Japanese.

## SAQA archives going to International Quilt Study Center

by Sandra Sider



I am very happy to announce that the International Quilt Study Center at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, is now the permanent repository for our SAQA archives. After the boxes are accessioned, researchers may request permission

from the archivist, Mary Ellen Ducey, to study this historical material. In addition, the IQSC will be able to consider archival proofs, newsletters, reviews, articles, and visuals for exhibitions.

In the first stage of this project, I worked with Yvonne Porcella, SAQA's founder and first president, in Modesto, California, for a few days

in May. Because Yvonne had stored the material from 1989 through 2002 in a professional document storage facility, the boxes were in good condition. I had the privilege of sitting beside Yvonne for hours as we looked through the boxes and made a preliminary inventory, with Yvonne sharing her memories of the early years. She says, "Reviewing the archive boxes for me was a nostalgic look back at the volunteers who helped form our organization. Each file revealed our dream programs, some successful some not, events planned and carried out. The boxes may be filled with papers, but to me they reveal the dedication of those who helped shape a vibrant organization."

We lifted and shifted seventeen boxes weighing a total of 513 pounds, a reminder of SAQA's

substantial contributions to quilt history. Milestones documented in the collection include our 1992 Art in Public Places Registry, the 1993 conference and exhibition at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the 1995 Arrowmont conference and exhibition. Of significant importance within quilt history are the many letters from artists and others responding to Yvonne's 1989 letter of inquiry about whether an organization such as SAQA was needed, and Yvonne's three notebooks containing her ideas and aspirations concerning SAQA.

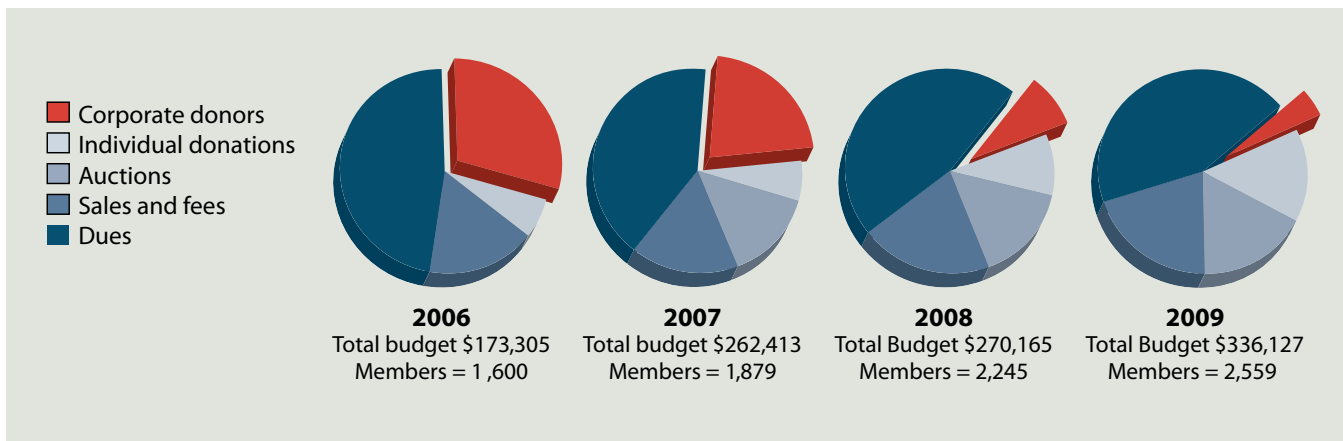
Martha and I look forward to sending additional archival material to the IQSC later this year, bringing the collection up to date.

*Sandra Sider, SAQA's vice president, has an M.L.S. from Columbia University, where she was trained in managing archives and other types of special collections.*

# Support SAQA's fundraising efforts

by Sandra Sider, vice president and fundraising committee chair

## SAQA's sources of income, 2006-2009



**W**hy is SAQA constantly asking for money?"

This question is sometimes asked of me as I travel and visit SAQA members. I respond by saying that we're not constantly asking for money, but we do have three appeals each year, including our auction. Let me explain why.

SAQA has gradually evolved into an international arts organization with more than 2,500 members and 8 professional staff. Our dues pay only forty percent of our expenses. While it is fortunate that our executive director has managed to carve out office space in her home, we still must pay the salaries of one full-time and seven part-time employees, plus accountants, etc. To maintain SAQA's visibility in the art world, we must pay for advertising—a significant part of our budget. The website, which many of our members use as online gallery space and for networking, is expensive to maintain and had to be moved to a new server this year. SAQA's exhibitions, publications, and regional events all require funding.

Because of the economic situation, our corporate donations have plummeted, from a high of \$56,775 in 2007 (22% of the budget) to just

\$15,115 in 2009 (4% of the budget). During this crisis, we must depend on our membership to step up and contribute, as you did in 2009 to pay for the exhibition hanging rods and in early 2010 to pay for the website upgrades. Our members contributed nearly \$50,000 in 2009 and have already given \$47,773 this year. Our strength lies in our numbers. If each member contributed only \$10 in response to our appeals, SAQA would raise \$25,000 each time. Please keep the power of numbers in mind the next time SAQA sends you a letter.

Looking toward the future, the board recently voted to establish a permanent endowment fund. Until now, SAQA has budgeted from one year to the next without any provision for the future. At the previous stages of our growth, that system was quite appropriate, but it did necessitate numerous fundraising appeals. We are hoping that eventually the income from an endowment fund will help bridge the budget gap each year and cover the cost of special projects. In this initial phase, we

would like you to consider opportunities for planned giving via legacy donations. If SAQA is an important part of your professional life, we hope that you will remember SAQA in your estate planning. (Please let Martha Sielman know if you have already done so.) We will be sending you instructions on how to participate in the endowment fund starting in January 2011.

Meanwhile, don't forget to sign up for the OneCause donations, through which we have raised \$365 to date at no cost to anyone. With the holidays just around the corner, each of your online purchases will benefit SAQA. Finally, consider joining the Loose Change donation program, where you can donate a small amount (\$4.95–\$19.95) each month. This program has already raised \$8,791. I signed up for it and have a big smile each month when I see the entry on my credit card bill.

*Thanks to Judith Content, Mary Pal, Kris Sazaki, Julie Scott, Martha Sielman, and Nelda Warkentin for their advice and expertise.*

**OneCause** — Sign up at [www.onecause.com](http://www.onecause.com) (specify Studio Art Quilt Associates)  
**Loose Change** — Sign up on the Make a Donation page at [www.saqa.com](http://www.saqa.com)

# Fine art at *ArtQuilt Elements*

by Vivien Zepf

I didn't know what I would see as I entered the Wayne Art Center for the first time to view the 2010 *ArtQuilt Elements* exhibit. I did know that *AQE*, formerly known as *Art Quilts at the Sedgwick*, moved to its current location at the Wayne Art Center when the Sedgwick closed and a new venue had to be located. I was certain the exhibition would be spectacular, given that the jurors had culled fifty pieces from more than 600 entries. I was, however, completely unprepared for the brilliance of the show.

The well-lit lobby of the Wayne Art Center allowed visual access to the open main gallery just beyond. But before getting there, visitors were greeted by Regina Benson's *Night Bloom* hanging on a wall to the left. Though intended to represent the blossoms of a cactus illuminated by moonlight, it is not a delicate piece. Its size immediately captured my attention. Its convex shape, projecting eight inches from the wall, added power to the subject, bringing the piece closer to the viewer. The sense of dimensionality was strengthened by a streak across the piece, as if a ray of moonlight were sliding across part of the canvas. Initially, I thought all the flowers were created from gathered and puckered fabric; the peaks and valleys within the flowers seemed to be real. Instead, Benson's rhizome discharge and soy wax resist processes transformed a flat surface into one with remarkable visual depth. Contrasting with quilting lines outlining the blossoms, Benson enhanced the convex shape with regularly spaced

horizontal quilting lines. These horizontal lines seemed natural, despite the fact that vertical lines would be more in keeping with an actual cactus. In Benson's capable hands, it's a terrific combination of shape and line creating a powerful visual impact.

Jason Pollen emphasized that he and the other jurors strove to create an exhibition which would showcase the diversity and richness of the medium with a balance of technique and emotional content. The artwork within the main gallery was easy to see and admire. This grand, open space, illuminated by sunlight streaming through skylights during the day, remained equally bright at night, with numerous well-placed lights. Artwork was presented in groupings that complemented one another in color and tone as well as size, so that no one piece was crowded by another. All were beautifully and professionally hung, including those with more unusual presentation requirements, such as Diane Siebels' *His Remembered Tree*, complete with limbs, a bird's nest, and a dangling 3D tidbit for the fledgling within.

Several artists were inspired by urban environments. Dianne Koppisch Hricko and Natalya Aikens both depict city environments, grounded



***Night Bloom*** 56 x 48 x 8 inches  
©Regina Benson

in steel and structure, using the soft hand of organza. In *Urban Rhythm*, Hricko places a layer of silk organza hanging unfettered atop layers of silks, crepe and dupioni, creating exciting visual depth. Like the city, her piece is always changing, as the top layer ripples and shifts, depending on whispers of breath or gusts from the air vents. Lines of opaque fabric cross the surface like girders that lead to blocks of fabric floating behind as if they were neighborhoods. Some of these areas are heavily populated by screen-printed circles aligned in grids. Other areas are open fields of color, containing hints of hand stitching waiting to be explored. The blocks vary in intensity as well, balancing the overall piece with degrees of opacity and color.

Aikens' pictorial piece, *Piter I*, is





Above: ***Piter I*** 18 x 18 inches ©Natalya Aikens

Left: ***Urban Rhythm*** 55 x 42 inches ©Dianne Koppisch Hricko

evocative of a snapshot within a larger frame. Aikens created a fantasy image of St. Petersburg using photographs she had taken of the city. She overlaid a print of a brick building with a different print of an open ironwork structure. Using silk organza and dryer sheets as her primary layers throughout, Aikens allows the sheer textiles to convey softness and fragility within an environment

we typically view as very hard and permanent. Aikens further enhances the ethereal quality of the combined images by using muted colors and wispy, frayed edges. The lines of the two buildings overlap, intertwine, and move beyond one another, extending beyond the framework of the piece and back again, giving us multiple visual points to leave and re-enter the piece. Aikens' piece is strengthened by her intense hand stitching to add curves and to de-emphasize some of

the linear spaces. She creates a new plane within the piece, an additional dimension that holds up well to the photographic images. Her choice to make the structural curves red was a masterstroke, first pulling us in to discover just what they are and then leading us from one side of the piece to another. Though only 18 x 18 inches, many viewers spoke of the visual impact of *Piter I* as being more in keeping with a larger piece, and I would agree.

Denise Furnish's brilliant *Nine Patch*

Continued on next page



***Nine Patch***  
77 x 136 inches  
©Denise Furnish



**Spring** 40 x 35 inches ©Paula Kovarik



**Dawn** 48 x 48 inches ©Linda Beach

first attracted me on the basis of the tongue-in-cheek humor of the title. Furnish took two traditional nine-patch quilts bound for the dump, cut them apart, and reorganized them into a new nine-patch: nine vertical stripes alternating in green and white. Though perhaps the most avant-garde of all the pieces in the exhibit (the strips are butted together and held down with acrylic medium, not stitching), this piece is also one bound closely to tradition. Furnish spoke passionately about wanting to revive these old quilts to cherish their makers and the memories stitched within them. She kept the original quilting intact and did not add any of her own. She painted over the surface of the quilts, allowing some of their red and blue colors to peek through, while building up the paint layers in others areas so the original quilts were almost obscured. This creates a wonderful multi-textured surface that is different everywhere you look. It's as if a text had been written and then obscured; viewers wanted to get in closer to see what was beneath.

Quilts inspired by nature were also on display. At first glance, Paula

Kovarik's quilt *Spring* looks like the layout of a circuit board, with small squares and rectangles of red and white on a seemingly blank, black background, an interesting composition of negative space and small forms creating balance and tension. On closer inspection, Kovarik's quilt is a celebration of Spring, played out across the fabric with delightful sketches in olive, gold, red, and white colored threads. The white pieced squares are evocative of seeds flying in the wind and drizzling rain. Red patches represent areas where seeds have taken hold, with sketched trees, roots, and flowers spreading and germinating all across the quilt. Following the path of a root might lead to another part of the quilt where the sun is rising. The strong negative space seen from a distance is filled with line. Kovarik's stark colors and pieced edges were engagingly juxtaposed with the delicate whimsical and curving lines of her quilting and hand embroidery.

Each year, months before each show, members of the local Heartstrings guild put in countless hours of behind-the-scenes work. In

recognition, the guild sponsors an award to be presented to the workers' favorite piece. This year, Heartstrings members selected Linda Beach's *Dawn* for this award. In *Dawn*, a tree stands awash with color as the first rays of light breach the horizon. By using multiple fabrics in the dark sky, Beach creates a background with unusual depth and interest. Background fabrics are sometimes close in value to those in the tree, blurring the edge between the two and making the pieced tree seem more organic. I was surprised by how much I liked the brightly colored plaids used in the tree, placed so that the lighter fabrics are on the side facing the rising sun.

Each of the quilts in the exhibition is exceptional and an exciting example of our medium. This exhibit will be on my calendar in the years to come, as it should be on yours.

*SAQA active member Vivien Zepf lives in Thornwood, New York. Her blog is [www.sevenpinesdesigns.blogspot.com](http://www.sevenpinesdesigns.blogspot.com) and her website is [www.VivienZepf.com](http://www.VivienZepf.com).*

To purchase the ArtQuilt Elements 2010 catalog, go to [www.artquildelements.com](http://www.artquildelements.com).



# Taking the sting out of rejection

by Mary McBride

In an attempt to educate the public and the artists about artistic value, I created *The Skinny Envelope Exhibition* featuring quilts that had not been accepted into other shows hanging alongside works that were accepted. The viewers had the opportunity to look at the works and figure out if the art was or was not “acceptable” and then check the list to see if they agreed with the various jurors who made the original choices.

The viewers were often surprised that they didn’t agree at all with those determinations, which led to a discussion about the art and the perception of jurors. The fact is that each person or panel of jurors has their own agendas and prejudices which skew the selections. I conceived of this exhibit because I’ve found that artists often don’t believe this when they receive those skinny envelopes. Instead, they assume that they and their art must not be good enough.

In this case, all but two of the 21 pieces were of excellent quality, and viewers were horrified that several beautiful works were among the rejected pieces. My point was that the work might be selected for another show by a different juror or even by that same juror a year later for another exhibit. Often it isn’t because the work isn’t good enough, though there is always that possibility. Sometimes it’s just how the jurors see the show and how much someone on the panel fights for the work.

When asked how I decided that the jurors were prejudiced without seeing the pool of quilts that were accepted to a particular exhibition, I

was able to relate my past nine years of experience with exhibitions. At first it seemed to me that the jurors were almost mystic when they would click through slides quickly, only pausing once in a while to note a piece. In time I realized that they were selecting works that grabbed their attention. When jurors have 300 entries for 30 spots, they look first for work they can reject because it is out of theme, size, focus, etc. Then they remove work that is not of the quality they seek. After they narrow it down, they take a closer look. This is a good reason to make sure your entry images are professionally photographed and that the work is strong and accurately portrayed.

Then it becomes a matter of the juror or jurors picking out pieces they like best and putting them together in a cohesive show. I’ve sat in on over 50 juror screenings and been active in at least 40 of them. There are always personal prejudices: “I don’t like the color purple,” “I hate stripes,” “I never select a human figure.” Or perhaps it’s complete disdain for sheers, palm trees, beaches, waves, weaving, glitz, etc. We all have our own prejudices, but we don’t usually get to act on them in this kind of yea-or-nay decision process.

The jurors work to select pieces that meet the goals of the particular exhibition. Once the acceptable works are selected, there remains the matter of looking at them to see that they work well together. Sometimes this is done by the curator. However, jurors can often select the works right off the screen and visualize the show



***Innocent Bystanders***

62 x 42 inches ©Deb Lacativa

Exhibited in *The Skinny Envelope* in Oct. 2009 at Gateway Center for the Arts in DeBary, Florida, after rejection by Quilt San Diego/Quilt Visions in 2008.

as a unit. A work that is wonderful may eventually be dropped because it doesn’t relate to the other art and may in fact create disharmony. Knowing the space where the work will be exhibited can be helpful—the clash can be ignored if there is plenty of space on both sides of the work or if the work can be hung separately.

The hardest part, of course, is writing that skinny letter to the artist. As the person who sets up the images, processes the database, and sends out those happy and sad letters, I’ve become very much in touch with the artists. I suppose it helps also that I am often in a similar situation when

See “Rejection” on page 32

# Easy monoprinting

Try a new technique  
for unique surface  
design

by Wen Redmond



**M**onoprinting entails making a print from a newly-painted non-absorbent surface (the plate). Designs can be transferred onto an entire piece or enhance a work in progress. The advantage of this technique is that it can be done at any point in your creative process. Paint a surface and flip it onto your work—it's that easy!

## Fabric

Be sure your fabric is washed to remove sizing or use PFD (prepared for dyeing) fabric. This is necessary for the best paint adhesion. You can also monoprint on commercially printed fabric or on sections of dyed or already painted fabrics. Your fabric can be wet or dry. When you want your design to retain detail or crisp edges, use dry fabric. When you want a diffused design or blended colors, dampen your fabric. Using a spray bottle filled with water, spray sections of the fabric or wet the entire piece and wring it out so it's not dripping wet.

**Fun Tip:** *There's no need to iron out wrinkles; they'll add to the texture of the completed monoprint.*

## Surfaces for Monoprinting

Just about any surface will do. I like to use a sheet of 4ml plastic. It's

lightweight, flexible, and transparent. The transparency allows exact placement of the image on the fabric. Other surfaces can include Plexiglas, cardboard, linoleum, blocks of wood, etc. Anything you can paint on, you can monoprint. Use your imagination.

## Paint

Any thick fabric paint will work. The paint needs to retain your design and not dry too quickly. You can also use a more liquid paint for less defined, more abstract images. I have also used basic acrylic paints for small details. Generally, acrylic paint dries too quickly for large works.

## Printing

I use a print table. You can create your own by padding a table slightly with a low-loft batt or layers of inexpensive felt. I cover this with a plain color fabric and protective plastic. The padding allows a better monoprint surface because it has some give which allows the design to transfer more smoothly to your cloth.

**Fun Tip:** *You can create a temporary print table by using a towel covered with plastic.*

## Create a monoprint

Create your designs by spreading paint onto your chosen surface. Spread paint with old credit cards, rags, brushes, sponges, and fingers—anything you can think of. While the paint is on the surface, you can manipulate, change, wipe away and rework until you like it. When finished, flip quickly onto your cloth. Press with your hands from the center out as you hold it firmly with your other hand to prevent sliding. You can also use a brayer to press it down onto the fabric. Peel up a section and peek to see how it has printed. Lay it down to press some more or remove. Sometimes you can get a shadow print by quickly spraying your monoprint surface with water and reapplying to cloth.

## Whole Cloth

Paint your monoprint surface and flip onto your cloth to create large swatches of color that cover significant areas. Repeat as often as you wish, rapidly, without too much advance planning; cover the fabric's surface. An unpredictable and surprising result occurs every time. Remember to let it dry between applications if you don't want colors to blend.



## Details

Transparency of the monoprint surface is an advantage when you wish to add details. Paint a clear plastic or Plexiglas surface and hold it over the cloth for placement before laying it down. This way, you can easily decide where designs can be placed. For small areas, you can cut sections of plastic slightly larger than the area you wish to detail. Create your design and print just that section. I have even used old CDs to create small monoprints.

**Fun Tip:** Use two surfaces, swirl a bit of paint onto one, smash them together, pull apart and print both. This creates an interesting coral-like texture.

## Negative or Positive

A positive image is created when what you paint or draw on the surface will be the actual image mono-printed onto the surface. A negative image is created when you paint the surface and then remove sections of

paint to create the design. This can be done in two ways. You can paint the surface and then write, draw, distress, or stamp into the surface and then monoprint. Or, using a pliable clear plastic as your plate, flip the painted plastic surface onto your piece, hold lightly on the unpainted edges and use the back of a brush handle, dull pencil, or a professional rubber-tip brush to make your designs directly on the fabric. Some paint, other than the actual design, will migrate to the fabric, but it creates a unique distressed appearance.

**Fun Tip:** Use a stamp and stamp into the monoprint paint and stamp onto the same or another surface as you are creating the monoprint. This creates a positive and negative design at the same time.

## Text

Using a brayer, apply paint onto flexible plastic. Position the surface and write directly on your work. This

is a negative technique. It has the advantage of not having to reverse your text. For a positive image, you can use a small nozzle bottle to write with; however, you'll need to create a template first. Write your text on tracing paper, reverse it, place a clear monoprinting surface over this, and trace with a line of paint. Flip this onto your fabric, and the text will be readable.

**Fun tip:** Use your clear surface to trace designs from your sketchbooks, newspapers, magazines — just about anywhere.

Enjoy experimenting with monoprinting. Combine multiple prints, highlight details, and feature designs developed during the printing process in your finished artwork. It's an extremely flexible, serendipitous way to create surface design! ▼

SAQA professional artist member Wen Redmond is a textile artist who has been featured on Quilting Arts TV. She lives in Strafford, New Hampshire and her website is [www.wenredmond.com](http://www.wenredmond.com).



Far left, left:  
**Monoprinted fabrics.**



Below:  
**A monoprinting plate inked in preparation for printing.**

# Art imitating art

by Mary Pal

Throughout history, artists have engaged in collaboration with other artists in order to learn from one another, as a playful pastime, or as a way of stretching themselves by introducing rules or restraints within which to work. The Surrealists played a game in the 1920s and 30s that we have come to know as “Exquisite Corpse,” in which collaborators added to a composition in sequence, leaving only a hint of what the previous artist contributed for the viewer to see.

A variation on this theme has been practiced by art quilters over the past several years, in which the image of a work of art is divided into sections that are then reproduced in fiber by each of the participants. While viewing one such work, a group of friends and I, all SAQA members, decided we’d love to be part of a project like that. One member of the group, Jean Gerster of Ottawa, Canada, offered to take the project on, and what follows is the story of how a remarkable piece of fiber art came to be.

Jean began by circulating an email to our regional members explaining that she wanted to celebrate the work of a female Canadian painter by creating a group piece inspired by a painting, as yet not chosen. The response was immediate and enthusiastic and a group of 20 from across Ontario and Quebec was formed: Deborah Bates, Cathy Breedyk-Law, Mary Cope, Rebekah Crown, Margaret Dunsmore, Robin Field, Meredith Filshie, Bethany Garner, Sandra Garner, Jean Gerster, Maggie Hannigan, Cynthia McNair, Carol Moore,

Lynne Morin, Margaret Morris, Judith Popiel, Elaine Quehl, Shirley White, Mitzi Zohar, and myself.

While researching the paintings of as many Canadian women artists as she could find, Jean found herself captivated by the works of Anne Savage, a Quebec painter who lived from 1896-1971 and was closely allied with Canada’s Group of Seven. In the end, Savage’s painting *Saint-Sauveur* was selected, not only for the beauty of the work, especially its rich colors, but Jean also realized that even when divided into 20 segments, each part of the painting retained interesting lines, color, and form, giving all participants something compelling and challenging with which to work.

After obtaining copyright permission from the executor of the Anne Savage estate and from the National Gallery of Canada to use the image of the work, she enlarged a photo of it and cut it into twenty pieces, each measuring 4 square inches. She distributed these to the participants, instructing them to enlarge their section to a 12-inch square. We established a deadline of four months to finish the work. Everyone agreed at the outset that they would prefer that the identity of the artist and the work remain a mystery. No one knew what the larger piece depicted, nor did they know what the pieces their fellow group members were working on looked like. This made the challenge all the more interesting.

In December, Jean made arrangements with the National Gallery for our group to visit the gallery to see the original painting and other

works by Savage. Touring the storage vault was a stirring experience for the eleven of us who were able to attend, as many of us had not met previously and now shared the bond of having worked on the mystery project together. Later that evening, after a celebratory dinner, we assembled the parts for the first time. Although two of the pieces had not yet arrived, we could see that the spirit of the original work had been preserved, and felt very excited about the result. As Jean reflects, “The thing that most stands out in my mind was the unity of the work. Even though no one had seen the original painting until their piece was finished, there was a real cohesion among the smaller works; each one seemed to speak to or channel the spirit of the larger piece.”

The individual 12-inch squares include felted pieces as well as quilted works. The techniques also included machine-piecing, machine and raw edge appliqué, embroidery, hand and free-motion machine quilting, as well as embellishment with pigments such as oil paint sticks and colored pencil.

When the group discussed exhibition opportunities, we realized that the *O Canada* exhibition at the International Quilt Festival in Chicago would be a wonderful venue, and Jean and Margaret Dunsmore set to work building a frame to which the individual mounted pieces could be attached, yet separated for shipping—no small feat. When the entry was accepted, there was great celebration online among group members, and there are plans to seek further opportunities when it returns home.





Top row, left to right: Margaret Morris, Mary Cope, Meredith Filshie, Jean Gerster, Cynthia McNair  
 2nd row, left to right: Bethany Garner, Sandra Garner, Robin Field, Margaret Dunsmore, Elaine Quehl  
 3rd row, left to right: Rebekah Crown, Judith Popiel, Cathy Breedyk-Law, Mary Pal, Shirley White  
 4th row, left to right: Lynne Morin, Carol Moore, Deborah Bates, Mitzi Zohar, Maggie Hannigan

What advice does Jean offer to others considering such a venture? "It is very important to let people know what your expectations are at the get-go. In addition, give plenty of time for execution and many reminders along the way." She advises that a good deal of thought must go into how the finished work will be assembled, and if the pieces are to be mounted, participants need to know in advance the depth of the frame. Before beginning, the group must also decide if they want the final piece to stay together to show or sell.

As a participant, I appreciate how important it was to have an organizer who exhibited the qualities essential to seeing the project through to fruition – tenacity, tranquility, and vision. Because of this, our collaborative effort reflected the very elements that inspired the Surrealists as they played their game: a little mystery, a sense of playfulness, and an opportunity to grow. ▼

*SAQA Central Canada co-rep Mary Pal is a moderator of SAQArtique02 and a member of the SAQA fundraising committee. She lives in Ottawa, Ontario, and her website is [www.marypaldesigns.com](http://www.marypaldesigns.com).*

# The *Tall Girl Series: A Body of Work*

by Carol Larson



*Coulda Been's* 32 x 61 inches ©2008 Carol Larson

**F**ive years ago I embarked on a project that simultaneously transformed my art and my life: to create work in a series as illustration for an autobiographical story. With little comprehension of how challenging this would actually be, I chose the *Tall Girl Series: A Body of Work* as the vehicle to accomplish this daunting task.

## The back story

When I was 17 years old and 78.5 inches tall, I was surgically shortened six inches with the intention of giving me a “normal” life. My authoritarian father was ascending the corporate ladder. Appearances were everything, and surgery became the parental solution to my “growth problem.” Further, I was forbidden from talking about it. My sense is that my father knew it was a mistake but didn’t want to be reminded by any

discussion of it.

I lived in denial that anything was different with my body until I finally began to question this choice, 18 years later. My father then told me that if I continued to discuss it he would disown me, so I returned to denial and a full life as mother, wife, and workaholic. In my mid 50s I began to suffer from joint debilitation as the result of these surgeries. Finally, I began to truly grieve the loss of my mobility and independence.

Still fearful of angering my father, I found my voice by screenprinting my story on cloth. I typed words expressing my anger at being silenced and made the fonts illegible, creating images that I then screenprinted onto cloth. My father, unaware of what the words meant, commented that my late mother would have been proud of this beautiful cloth. I continued writing stories, and my healing began

as I envisioned a small book with a collection of stories illustrated with my artwork, which became the *Tall Girl Series: A Body of Work*.

## The plan

Knowing I was capable of doing the work but likely to procrastinate in fear of completing such a deeply personal project, I asked Marion Coleman, a trusted friend I met through SAQA, to mentor me. Her knowledge, resources, and encouragement kept me motivated. She challenged me to develop narrative work. What would be the point of telling a story if the viewer couldn’t decipher what I was communicating? She also encouraged me to work large, envisioning it in a museum or gallery setting rather than in my studio. And she pushed me to design eight more pieces when I wanted to stop at twelve. A strong series has at least 20 pieces,



she advised. Of the 23 pieces in the finished series, 17 are narrative and 6 are abstract. Only two are smaller than 30 inches.

I developed a written plan and a working title. In the end, I retained this title because I loved the pun of a “body” of work. Writing down my intention, purpose, and timeline gave me direction and helped me forget how intimidated I felt at attempting such an undertaking. My intention was three-fold:

- To create a body of work that visually explains the challenges and experience of being a tall girl in America, in addition to having a body surgically altered to conform to the standards of “normalcy,” beauty, and body image.
- To create a traveling exhibit of the series, to educate the art-viewing public in general, and women specifically, on body-image issues still relevant today.
- To publish a companion book.

The initial timeline of two years to complete the work was quite optimistic. I actually finished 14 months after that original goal.

## The process

I made a list of every word or painful experience associated with my childhood, adolescence, surgeries, recovery, and adulthood. Although I had repressed this story for 40 years, I was shocked when the initial list contained 64 ideas. To make it manageable, I created seven sub-categories: bullying, physical changes, psychological effects, etc. All 64 ideas fit easily into these sub-categories.

I asked my adult daughter to pose as a template for the work. Using

digital images, I traced the outline of her profile on acetate and, using an overhead projector, created a paper pattern. When I needed faces for a crowd, I used a family photo in the same manner. I chose blank stares for the tall girl, as I felt that a poorly drawn or stitched face would detract from the meaning of the work. I was able to create my vision despite a lack of realistic drawing skills.

An early piece, *Well-Meaning Folks*, focuses on the stupid questions I continue to be asked daily about my stature. *Those Who Refuse to See* reflects on familial silence and lack of compassion. Anger that my parents never took responsibility for the surgical decisions was so palpable that in designing *Whose Decision?* I ran the rotary cutter through the initial piece until it was pure confetti. It was over a year before I was able to start anew and complete it. Another difficult piece to design was *Medical Research*, which reflects my feelings of humiliation at being used as a case study for medical students at a teaching hospital. For *What Are You Standing On?* I painted the sole of my foot and the sole of my shoe with black tempera paint, pressed them onto paper, and from that made a screen for printing.

I struggled to keep the artwork real as opposed to pretty. I was disappointed when *Transfusions*, screen-printed with three shades of red paint onto torn bed sheets, finished as an interesting art piece rather than



photo by Gregory Case

**What Are You Standing On?**  
39 x 30 inches ©2006 Carol Larson

the messy, bloody, and gory one I had imagined. I wondered whether I was subconsciously making pretty rather than shocking work, as if pretty would soften the impact. I was continually on the lookout for flesh-toned fabric for some pieces, while for others, I dyed and screen-printed fabric to achieve the right effect. I titled the work with storytelling in mind so if I were not present with the exhibit, the viewer would understand my message. I listened intently to supporters of the project and ignored detractors, while keeping the series a secret from my family until it was completely finished.

The series waxed and waned. I would work feverishly for weeks and then stop cold. While envisioning what I wanted to do with the completed series, I vacillated about why I would want to expose myself. Fear played a major role. I was terrified

See “Tall Girl” on page 38

# Conquer the Internet with these Web publishing strategies

by Cynthia Long

In 2010, every artist has two lives. She has her life where she makes her art, and she has her life where she promotes her art. I'm going to bet you already publish online. Perhaps you have a website and/or a blog, participate in an online group or forum, and send images to friends or clients via email.

How do you prioritize what's most important, get it done, and get back in the studio? After spending several months reorganizing my approach to my own online life, I want to share some ideas to maximize your time and improve your results.

## 1. Motivation: Revisit why you're publishing content on the web

Defining your motivation will help you shape the type of content you want to share. Every time you come up with an idea, ask yourself if it fits within your goals.

### Motivation level: make art

- Keep friends and family current on work
- Write without having to get permission from others
- Develop a voice
- Learn technology at a comfortable pace
- Establish a portfolio of in-progress or completed works

### Motivation level: make a living from art

- Create a public persona
- Maintain a professional presence
- Show a gallery of past/sold works
- Show a gallery of works currently for sale

- Create a buzz around works that are coming soon
- Publish materials that enhance an offline career of teaching, speaking, or showing
- Keep your name in front of critics and clients between shows & events
- Sell quilts

## 2. Make it easy on yourself: Combine your website and your blog

I'd say the big trend for 2010 is taking control of your own website and blog.

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*Defining your motivation will help you shape the type of content you want to share.*

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I love WordPress (wordpress.com) because it gives you all the tools to manage everything in one place. If you have an existing blog on another service, chances are you can move those posts over to WordPress with the press of a button. There's a learning curve, and it may be worth hiring a professional to get everything set up with custom logo, colors, navigation, and icons. But once that's done, you should be able to make updates and add blog entries.

The costs are reasonable. A

WordPress site with a custom URL and customized design can cost as little as \$50 per year. Hiring a professional to help you set up the navigation and edit copy can cost from \$500-\$1500.

## 3. The most important part: What to say

Deciding on the content for a website is relatively easy. Usually, it will include a home page, a bio and/or resume, a portfolio or gallery of completed work, and then, depending on how much you want to share, you might include a few extra pages with drawings, works in progress, or personal philosophy. If you teach, you should include a schedule, reviews from past sessions, and perhaps a syllabus or list of required materials.

On the other hand, a blog gives an artist a lot more freeform choices. Ongoing content should be developed to bring viewers to your site every time you post. I like to think of a blog as a weekly article that gives insight into the mind of the artist. If you're new to blogging, a great place to start is by reading. Study some of the blogs you would like to emulate. Most people go to blogs for how-to, inspiration, leadership, news of upcoming events, or more information about the person writing the blog.

A blog doesn't have to be just words. Use lots of photos. Select topics that lend themselves to imagery.

### Ideas:

- Talk about the art of someone you like. If you use images, be sure to





**Cascade**

21 x 28 inches

©2010 Cynthia Long

credit the artist and link to his/her website.

- Show where your inspiration comes from. Include your own photography or links.
- Tell about techniques you do well or ones you want to learn.
- Give resources for materials with links to online vendors.
- State some of your goals, and then later, revisit what came from pursuing the goals.
- Show drawings or sketches of your ideas that led to finished work.
- Tell where and how you are selling your art.
- Share some of the business problems and solutions you've found in artmaking.

#### **4. Order and organization: The technical stuff**

I find these guidelines useful. Adjust as appropriate for you.

- Write against a calendar. Print a 3-month calendar and write in topics for your blog, with the expectation that you will post a new article every Tuesday (or whichever day you choose), rain or shine. One

new entry per week is plenty. Write more frequently if you find you like writing.

- Include 3-6 images. Any more is overkill. Any less feels like something is missing. Sources can be your own photography, scanned images, images from other websites (credited & linked), screen captures (credited & linked), or drawings you create with software.
- Keep it brief. Tell your story in 3-4 paragraphs or less.
- Use headings. They break up the text, creating white space on the page and drawing attention to what you've designated as important.
- Include links. Linking to other sites is a smart way to share more information without having to write it yourself. Make your links open in a separate window.
- Develop a style. You want visitors to your blog to recognize your point of view and your voice.

#### **5. Promote your promotion**

How are your fans going to find your website and blog if you don't tell them? Use networking and social

media. And remember this tip:

Social media is 10% media and 90% social. That means you use the tools to publish the media, but the real benefits come from being social and interactive.

- Add an art quilting page to your Facebook profile. Ask your friends to become fans. Post once or twice a week.
- Set up and use Twitter. I manage my Twitter account using Hoot-Suite.com. This allows me to calendar my tweets in advance. Most of my tweets are promotions of the blog articles I like to read, which I collect via Google Reader.
- Consider sending out a monthly email update via Constant Contact, a bargain at only \$15 per month with customizable templates.
- Create a LinkedIn profile and connect to everyone you know.
- Use all of the widgets already available on WordPress. Give people an RSS feed to your blog, a place to sign up for an email subscription to your blog, a link to follow you on Twitter and Facebook, and a link to sign up for your monthly email updates.
- Set up your WordPress options so that your Facebook and Twitter accounts automatically send an update whenever you post to your blog.
- Add a link to your website and blog in your email signature. If you use webmail, [www.wisestamp.com](http://www.wisestamp.com) is a useful tool.

See "Web publishing" on page 33



# The SAQA Visioning Project

## Five participants share their experiences

SAQA's Visioning Project was developed by Lisa Chipetine, SAQA president. It is based on the power of visualizing your goals and dreams in order to make them happen. Visioning Project goals are different for each person, but many members find a community of others working towards a similar endpoint.

By making a public commitment in the special Visioning Project section of SAQA-U, members are motivated to take those important first steps. The Visioning Project team then works to help them brainstorm, network, regroup, and follow the steps necessary to achieve their goals. While many members began the Visioning Project when it was announced in May 2009, new participants may join at any time.

Special Visioning Project conference calls keep members motivated and informed. The conference next May in Denver will include opportunities to hear about completed Visioning Projects and to celebrate the success of this program.

To start your own Visioning Project, go to: <http://visioning.saqau.wikispaces.net/Project+Description>.

### Judy Warner

Victor, New York

When I first learned about the SAQA Visioning Project, I was immediately drawn to it. I'd spent about five years exploring techniques and attending workshops, and I had begun to realize that my interests were in the non-traditional side of quilting. I felt that I was drifting from one workshop to the next, creating pieces to learn a technique rather than because a particular piece expressed something important to me. I hoped that the Visioning Project would help me begin to create art pieces independently, make me more aware of how I was spending my time, and keep me on task.

So I approached the Visioning Project as a way to focus. From the start, the project challenged me to define my vision and write out steps to achieve it. That was a learning experience in itself, as it quickly became evident that my initial goal was far too ambitious. Without the Visioning Project, I might have given up in frustration. But with the support of the other members, I realized that what

I needed to do was step back a bit. Ironically, by doing that, I actually accomplished my original goal.

Halfway through my first year, I can say that the project has changed my life. That might sound dramatic, but it's true. The project has helped me carve out time for what I love to do. It has given me models of how other people live out their dreams of being artists. It has helped me find my way through the mountain of resources available through SAQA and elsewhere and put my hands on the specific information relevant to me at any point in my journey.

Above all, I have felt the support of the other participants whether or not we were working on related goals. At first I was totally intimidated by the level of experience and the artistry of some of the members. As the months have passed, however, I have found these impressive members to be incredibly helpful to me as a relative newbie.

At this point, the Visioning Project is a natural part of my life as an artist. I look to it for community, information, and feedback as I define and pursue my own goals.

### Lynn Thompson

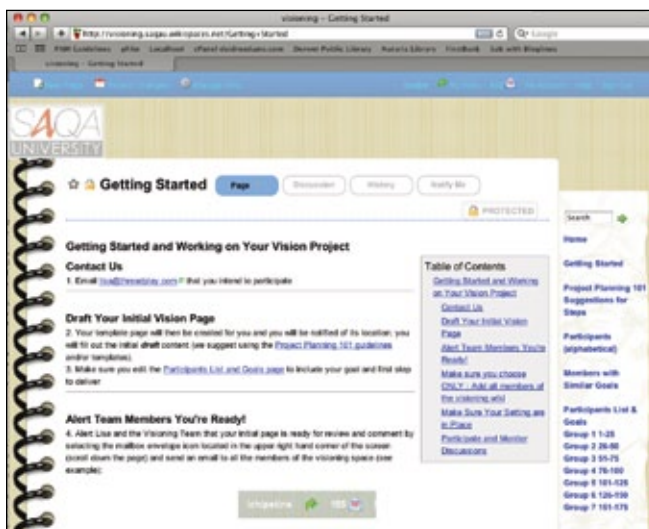
Lake Forest, California

Textiles are my passion, my business, and my hobby. Growing up in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, I was always surrounded by textiles. Quilting since I was 17, sewing my whole life, and custom sewing for interior designers for the past seven years has led me to realize that many people miss out on the fabulous textiles created by fiber artists. The vision of a high-end textile showroom for interior designers has always been in the back of my mind; I just didn't have the nerve to say it out loud or make it a reality.

Enter the SAQA Visioning Project. It became a place for me to put myself out there in a supportive environment, to test my vision, to receive feedback and direction. It became an endless supply of resources because many of the artists have professional experience from other careers. I took advantage of everything I could.

This past year has launched me into areas I knew existed but didn't have the ability to tie into a cohesive package: branding, wikis, LinkedIn, blogging, Facebook, Internet marketing,





was learning a lot, but was it mine? Or was it all too derivative? I was beginning to feel a strong need to make my work more personal and genuinely me. The Visioning

Project came along at precisely the right time. It offered a structure and framework to explore my personal goals, an opportunity to be supported by like-minded “textilians,” the SAQA membership. And it gave me a year’s worth of time to work on my own specific project. Fantastic! This was exactly what I needed.

I had been struggling with a series of work that felt kind of blah, no longer fun. I didn’t really want to finish it but felt obligated. Then Lisa Chipetine’s article about the Visioning Project showed up on my computer screen. The germ of that idea took hold, and I couldn’t shake it. Hmm ... maybe with SAQA’s support, this Visioning Project could really help me. I completely switched gears, abandoned that no-fun series, and enrolled in the project. My goal: to find my own voice. I felt invigorated, fresh and focused.

The most satisfying result of my participation in the Visioning Project has been to put into print and say out loud, “I am going to try to find my own voice.” Just saying that has forced me into action, ignited my enthusiasm, and headed me on a path to discover who Jennifer Cooper is. “If you can envision something, you can make it happen.” The person who said that truly knew what she was talking about.

Right now, halfway through my Visioning Project exploration, Jennifer Cooper seems to be all things shibori, itajime, and discharge. I am truly loving this adventure of self-discovery and finding the work I’m making far more personal and satisfying than ever before. I am beginning to hear and see my own voice.

artist’s ethics and protocol, exhibits, photography, video (my new tool, the iFlip), PowerPoint, gallery openings, outsourcing, networking, SCORE, testimonials, Google calendars, artist consultants, commercial and residential requirements for art, and lastly, confidence and patience.

## Jennifer Cooper

North Vancouver, British Columbia

For most of my short yet totally enjoyable 11-year quilting life, I spent my time sampling, learning, and emulating other quilt artists. Books, DVDs and magazines were my primary guides, with a multitude of authors and teachers. However, I wasn’t feeling much satisfaction with any of the work I was making. I

## Nancy G. Cook

Charlotte, North Carolina

Participating in the Visioning Project is benefiting me in several important ways. It is helping me to develop a goal for the year and helping me to stay focused with careful planning and regular reporting to others in the project. I have been directed to specific people for information, and they have been very forthcoming with their help and knowledge.

Being able to ask questions and get timely answers from someone much further down the path has been enormously beneficial. This project is like having a whole group of mentors as close as my computer. I am very grateful for the encouragement, information, and advice.

Some of my specific achievements to date include changing my exhibition focus to more juried art shows with just a few key juried quilt exhibitions, a solo show scheduled for this fall, creating a new portfolio to present to galleries, choosing and purchasing a new camera, and working with a gallery.

Now at the halfway point, I am excited about the next six months of the project.

See “Visioning Project” on page 34



Karen Schulz

***Deep Into Summer: First Fall***

35 x 52 inches ©2006  
www.karen-schulz.com

The image is a loose translation of a photograph I took on Ocracoke Island in North Carolina. And yes, those vines really did grow that way!



Heidi Zielinski

***Capture the Sunrise***

24 x 23 inches ©2009  
heidizielinski.com

This piece incorporates an image that was taken from my front yard of the sunrise over the Sapphire Mountains. I printed it on organza. I love the interplay of the stone and bone beads with the fabrics and colors in this piece.



Grietje van der Veen

***Sunset at Tekaha***

20 x 20 inches ©2008  
www.textileart.ch

This quilt was inspired by a visit to New Zealand. I like the sunset atmosphere at the shore with the silvery shimmer of the receding water.





Annie Helmericks-Louder

***Land's Cape: Sowing Field***

76 x 125 x 1 inches ©2007  
www.helmericks.com

I experience our planet as a great living body with its surfaces acting as its skins or clothing. There are moments as I work when I seem to slip under its "garments" and feel included within its grand embrace.



Martha Cole

***Lichen, From Tree Bark on the Prairies***

52 x 24 inches ©2008  
www.marthacole.ca

By actively witnessing the subtle variations of organic patterning, I am learning to feel comfortable within the complexity and interrelatedness of the natural world.



Ree Nancarrow

***Mountains with Parka Squirrels***

42 x 26 inches ©2009  
reenancarrow.com

This is an Alaska summer landscape, with mountains in the distance, a braided river flowing by, and three small ground squirrels surrounded by typical vegetation in the foreground.



# Inside the world of international teaching

by Lynne Davis

Going into her first class in Canada, Bev Rebolo says she felt like a country bumpkin. “What was I, a self-taught quilter from darkest Africa, going to teach these streetwise, sassy Canadians? And yet, that turned out to be my strength. I had worked out methods of solving problems using what was available to me. I had combined colors they balked at—clashing, breaking the rules—and I found that the students loved it! For them, it was part of the African experience.”

Bev is one of many art quilters who travel the globe each year. She has taught in Kenya, Canada, and her home country of Zimbabwe.

She began the class by showing a quilt made by women from rural areas of Zimbabwe using donated fabrics “with no regard to color, texture, or fabric type.” These women do not have access to electric machines, batting, or modern thread. Bev’s students were fascinated. She taught vocabulary, including the words *dhuku*, a head scarf worn by married women, and *mbereko*, a towel for carrying one’s baby on her back. Her class became more than a quilting lesson.

## Landing an international teaching job

How do Bev and other quilters land these exciting international jobs? Dena Crain, an American living in Kenya since 1990, recommends getting a website or blog, posting frequently on e-lists, and teaching on the local and regional levels. She also teaches classes online for Quilt University, which has helped to get her

name out. “All these things serve to make the quilting community aware of your presence and your willingness to teach. They also help you gain experience and develop your teaching persona,” Dena says.

Pamela Allen of Canada has a site specifically for marketing her workshops, which focus on the art aspects of quilting. Caryl Bryer Fallert keeps a high profile, showing her work regularly at national and international venues. Her work is frequently published in quilting and fiber art periodicals. Katie Pasquini Masopust’s classes attract people who know her from her books, and she has created a following among former students. Word of mouth is still a great marketing tool. Bev has to rely on it entirely as email and the Internet only work sporadically in Zimbabwe.

## Preparation

Perhaps the biggest challenge of teaching abroad is the preparation, which is time consuming and detailed. It requires assembling the necessary travel documents, organizing oneself for extended travel, and gathering and transporting materials needed for the workshop.

Caryl recommends checking ahead for work permit regulations and visa requirements; the group that hires you will not automatically do this. Karen Eckmeier has traveled to Canada and New Zealand. She recommends a thorough study of paperwork requirements and suggests finding out if you need to have a sponsor to enter the country. Pamela Allen conducted a lot of research on

both visas and health issues before traveling to South Africa and made sure she had the necessary inoculations and booster shots.

## What to bring

How much to bring when traveling is an individual choice. Besides quilts, sewn samples, fabric and embellishments, some teachers take handouts and class outlines, certain tools, books, photographs, and kits. Several bring laptops for digital presentations. Some sell books, fabrics, CDs, and other materials. However, Sarah Brewin, who teaches for the Kenya Quilting Guild, keeps it really simple when she travels, bringing only samples of quilts and sometimes kits and directions.

Pamela brings at least fifteen quilts, noting the expensive penalties for overweight luggage. She sends handouts via computer and has her students print them out. Katie always brings quilts with her, ships the odd supplies, and arrives a day early to shop for other supplies. This also gives her time to get over jet lag.

As for on-site supplies, most but not all of the teachers require sewing machines. Some want tables for demonstration and display, design walls, ironing boards, irons, or black or white boards. Students are sometimes asked to bring basic sewing equipment, some fabric and notions, and drawing tools.

Caryl says that the most important thing is to be as transparent as possible in all your transactions and communications. She puts in writing exactly what she



Dena Crain teaching at Quilted Fabrics in Johannesburg, South Africa, September 2009.

requires—everything from cutting boards and irons to electrical outlets, a projector stand, and a room with lights that can be dimmed.

## Workshops

Sizes of workshops vary, averaging about twenty students, although some classes can be much smaller. Fees vary even more drastically, ranging from \$400 to \$800 for a full day, and \$200 to \$450 for a half day. Usually an extra fee is charged for each student when the number goes over twenty. Lectures range from \$250 to \$450. In addition, most teachers expect payment for all travel expenses, lodging, and meals.

But in the African countries of Kenya and Zimbabwe, things are sometimes quite different. When Bev Rebolo went to Kenya, she taught for two days for lodging, board, and a return ticket. When Sarah Brewin goes to Kenya, she chooses projects that her students can complete, and she brings items she knows they can't get. She also brings extra kits because there are always people who haven't signed up ahead of time. She sometimes adds extra days to accommodate them. From her Kenyan students, she has learned about the

colors of Africa and how to use them. She has also learned, like them, to "make beautiful quilts and wall hangings using fabric from clothes bought off the streets because they can't get fabric from the bolt."

The quilters who come from Africa to teach in other countries find significant differences.

Bev Rebolo says of her teaching in Canada, "It was amazing to have a brand new machine set up and ready for each student, with a technician hovering in the background!"

## Language

All of Caryl's students in South Africa spoke English, as they do in many parts of the world. In Japan, though, Caryl needed a translator. "She was with me almost every minute I wasn't in my hotel room asleep. The first time I went, the teaching facility asked for a complete script of everything I planned to say several weeks ahead of time. This was a daunting task, but it led to doing a complete script for most of my regular lectures so I stay on track with time and ideas and don't fall into awkward 'senior' moments. By the second and third trips, I was using Macromedia Director (PowerPoint on steroids) for my

programs, and I included the English text on the screen with my images. This was a help to both the translator and my students, who often read English even if they're hesitant to speak it. I also packaged up the presentation on CD-ROM so I could sell it to students in the class."

## Know your audience

Dena advises knowing your material and your students well. If their level is intermediate or advanced, it's important to offer original work and a unique technique. Along the same lines, Pamela Allen stresses the importance of flexibility in teaching. "Certain ideas that look good on paper don't always succeed in the classroom. I find I'm constantly tweaking my classes." Listening to student feedback has enriched her courses and, she hopes, the enjoyment of the students. Though their skill level was high, Caryl's Japanese students preferred to make projects from kits, with everyone doing the same project.

## Last thoughts

Quilt teachers stay in hotels, college dorms, conference centers, and

See "International teaching" on page 35



# The great website debate: To price or not to price?

by Carol Taylor

**D**uring my preparation for my talk on *Pricing, Sales, and Commissions* for the 2009 SAQA Conference in Athens, Ohio, I asked 56 well-known quilt artists how they price their quilts. The answers to most of the pricing questions were covered in my article *Sales Advice: Pricing Your Artwork* in the Summer 2010 SAQA Journal. Because pricing is such a mystery to many artists, and we're often taught that talk of money is taboo, I wanted to take my questioning to the next level and discuss the controversial topic of posting prices for artwork on websites.

I started off with an easy question: do you have a website or a blog? Most of the 56 artists feel that having a web presence is essential to their marketing efforts. 91% percent have one, or the other, or both. Then I asked if they had sold any quilts from their websites. 75% said yes, while 25% said no.

Lisa Call ([lisacall.com](http://lisacall.com)) has an Affordable Art section on her website where her artwork is priced mostly in the \$30-85 range. She has sold quite a few pieces off her site since late 2008. Judy Zoelzer Levine ([www.judylevine.com](http://www.judylevine.com)) has found that website sales "fluctuate with the economy, but mostly small things sell easily."

My own experience is that since 2001, I have sold 33 quilts where my website was the source of the sale. It always amazes me that people will purchase something so tactile without seeing it in person.

Strong opinions came out of my next question: Do you list your prices on your website? 35% replied yes,

and 65% responded no. Those that do were emphatic as to why they do. Kim Ritter ([www.kimritter.com](http://www.kimritter.com)) was up front with why she lists them, "Because Karey Bresenhan said she doesn't like to email to ask for prices. She wants them listed, and she's the biggest collector I know!" Diane Wright ([dianewrightquilts.blogspot.com](http://dianewrightquilts.blogspot.com)) intends to publish her prices based on her own experience with buying art online. She says, "Making a website is this year's goal. I will list the prices because as a purchaser I never, or rarely, inquire about a price and am a bit annoyed when it isn't posted."

When asked if she posts prices, Michele Hardy ([www.michelehardy.com](http://www.michelehardy.com)) says, "Definitely! It cuts down on wasting my time and theirs. And it keeps things on the up and up." Eileen Doughty ([www.doughtydesigns.com](http://www.doughtydesigns.com)) adds, "I've read that people won't ask for a price if it's not there; they'll assume they can't afford it or are too embarrassed to ask, or won't take the time to ask." Rayna Gillman ([www.studio78.net](http://www.studio78.net)) says, "It saves me time, trouble, and false hope to just have them listed." Deborah Fell ([www.deborahfell.com](http://www.deborahfell.com)) has a specific section on her website labeled "Art for Sale." Her prices in this section range from \$125 for *Fireline* (16 x 12 inches) to \$2,400 for *Body of Work* (64 x 37 inches). She also has an Etsy store account to sell her artwork.

Caryl Bryer Fallert ([www.bryerpatch.com](http://www.bryerpatch.com)) says, "My prices are the same wherever my work is sold, so there is no reason not to post the prices. It saves a lot of time

corresponding with people who love your work but hope to buy it for much less than it's worth. I don't like to ask prices, and I don't make my customers ask." Laura Wasilowski ([www.artfabrik.com](http://www.artfabrik.com)) agrees. "I want to be up front with my customers and avoid the back and forth of price discussions with potential buyers." Judy Zoelzer Levine says, "I used to not have my prices on the web, but I didn't like the gasp I heard when quoting the price. I think it's better for everyone to know up front what they're getting into."

The 65% who don't put prices on their website were just as adamant as those who do. When asked if she lists her prices, Regina Benson ([www.reginabenson.com](http://www.reginabenson.com)) says, "Absolutely not! My website is for people to get to know me and my work. There are plenty of ways to get in touch with me for further information. If, or when, my primary goal is to sell lots and lots directly from my website, then I would construct my site differently to be more sales oriented." Margaret Cusack ([www.margaretcusack.com](http://www.margaretcusack.com)) agrees, saying "I do not have prices listed on my website. I consider the site a showcase to attract commissions rather than a catalog of artworks for sale." Carolyn Mazloomi ([www.carolynmazloomi.com](http://www.carolynmazloomi.com)) emphatically says, "Never! The site is primarily there to let people know I exist."

Lonni Rossi's ([www.lonnirossi.com](http://www.lonnirossi.com)) philosophy is, "I'd rather have the chance to feel out the buyer and possibly negotiate a better deal." Deidre Adams ([www.deidreadams.com](http://www.deidreadams.com)) says,



### **White Oak Rings and Ray**

50 x 26 inches ©2004 Eileen Doughty

Eileen sold this quilt directly from her website.

"Posting prices is not cool if you're represented by a gallery." Carolyn Lee Vehslage ([www.clvquilts.com](http://www.clvquilts.com)) reasons, "I prefer to have a dialogue with a potential customer first. That way I can really understand their desires and budget, and then provide them with a quilt in their price range."

Beth Carney ([www.bethcarneystudio.com](http://www.bethcarneystudio.com)) says, "I don't list the prices because I really am ambivalent about selling them. If someone really loves one and wants to contact me, I do have a price list. I was also hoping to discourage scammers." Sue Holdaway-Heys ([www.sueholdaway-heys.com](http://www.sueholdaway-heys.com)) says, "95% of my work is sold on the website, and I don't list my prices. Having customers contact me gives me an opportunity to talk about my commission work and how a unique quilt can be tailored to their space, colors, and style." Susanne McCoy ([www.susannequilts.com](http://www.susannequilts.com)) notes, "I mark my quilts 'Available for Purchase' and that's just the right amount of info to tempt them to call and start a dialogue."

Some artists list prices for certain works but not others. Susan Shie ([www.turtlemoon.com](http://www.turtlemoon.com)) says, "I list prices on the small pieces, not the

big ones, because people don't buy the big work from the site and I don't want them to focus on how expensive my big work is. I do have my formula up there, so anyone with real curiosity can find my prices for any works." Judy Dales ([www.judydales.com](http://www.judydales.com)) answers, "My prices don't appear on the front pages of my website. I want people to enjoy the quilts without the distraction of sizes, techniques, and price. But when a viewer clicks a thumbnail, a larger image appears and the price is stated there. I know the price is important, but I try to be discreet about displaying it."

Jeanne Williamson's ([www.jeannewilliamson.com](http://www.jeannewilliamson.com)) approach is to list only work that's affordable (\$30-325). "I do so because I could never sell this work via a gallery; I could never afford to get only 50% of the selling price." Cathy Kleeman ([www.cathyquilts.com](http://www.cathyquilts.com)) says, "I used to list prices but took them off. It hasn't seemed to make any difference."

Quilt collector Del Thomas ([delquilts.blogspot.com](http://delquilts.blogspot.com)) also chimed in on the price listing debate. She says, "I am pleased to see that so many art quilt makers have websites now. For years I've been beating the drum—I can't imagine why anyone wouldn't take advantage of being in an online spotlight for people all over the world. I've purchased a number of quilts online and have only been

burned once. Now I have a provision in my sales contract stating that I can return the quilt within a certain amount of time if it's not as advertised. But I haven't returned any. I've also been campaigning to have artists post their prices. It seems everyone isn't as brazen as I am, and they're hesitant to contact the artist because if the work is too expensive they'll be embarrassed to say they can't afford it.

"I also think the artist should indicate on a quilt that has been sold that it is now part of a private or corporate collection. It helps prospective buyers to know that this artist's work has been selected by people with some experience collecting art quilts or textiles. Most important of all is that the artist or her representative answers emails and follows up on prospective customers. Some artists have just never answered me or written that they will get back to me and never do. I've crossed them off my list forever!"

So there are the pros and cons of publishing your prices on your website. I hope that this article will help you solidify your own thoughts on whether or not to list your prices. For my own website, I mark quilts "sold" when they sell and figure that's enough of a hint to tell readers that my quilts are for sale. I'm with the group of artists who prefer to have a dialogue with potential buyers, and not listing prices allows me to do that. ▼

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



# The world of commercial fabric design

## Three artists share their experience and insight

by Colleen Ansbaugh

**H**ave you ever wondered how commercial fabrics come to life? Where does it start? How does the magic happen? What were they thinking? Three well-respected textile designers shared some insights into their work: Paula Nadelstern (Benartex), Lonni Rossi (Andover), and Pat Sloan (P&B). Each has a unique perspective and fabulous results.

### What is the process of making commercial fabric from original idea to fabric on the bolt?

**Lonni Rossi:** The entire process takes me between 12 and 18 months. There are several steps involved, and even though it ultimately begins and ends with the designer, entire teams of people bring each fabric into existence. These are the steps in my experience:

1. The designer has an idea and starts working it up into a piece of visual art. The idea might be a theme, like railroad stations for example, or a visual idea, like a hand-drawn doodle, or photos taken on a nature walk or on a trip to another part of the world. Once the idea grabs you and the visuals start to flow, anything related to the topic is fair game.
2. Once the designer produces the artwork, the art is presented to the creative director at the fabric manufacturing company. It arrives in a variety of forms—it may be digital, hand-drawn, photographic, hand-painted, or screened. It may be a sketch or completed artwork; just about anything the designer feels will work to start bringing their ideas to life.
3. The creative director, designer, and marketing director meet to decide how the fabric group will take shape.
4. The artwork is scanned and worked on digitally. Or, if the artwork presented is finished art (i.e., already in repeat and colorized), it is sent directly to the mill where engravings will be made from it.
5. The mill completes the engravings and sends back “strike-offs” to the designer and the creative team for approval.
6. Up to three rounds of changes and color corrections may take place before the team, especially the designer, is satisfied.
7. The final strike-offs are presented to the company president, the vice-presidents of marketing, production, and sales, by the creative team for final approval.
8. Upon approval, the strike-offs are sent back to the mill with a print order.
9. Six to eight weeks later, production yardage is sent from the mill to the company and the designer. It rarely happens, but sometimes there’s a color or printing error and this is the last chance to correct it. Otherwise, if the production yardage is deemed “okay,” the mill prints the entire order.
10. The designer uses the production yardage to make samples of quilts,

garments, or a variety of craft projects to present at Quilt Market.

11. The designer creates a “free-to-use” pattern for the company to help in marketing the new line. These patterns are used to promote the fabric and usually appear as free downloads on the company’s and designer’s websites.

### What inspires you?

**Pat Sloan:** My creative life is inspired by the many images I look at on a daily basis. I love art, all kinds of art. I love gardens, flowers, architecture, beautiful photography, food, and color in just about anything. Those images are constantly coming into my brain, and they become interwoven and they meld together.

I subscribe to hundreds of blogs and look at zillions of images a week to be inspired. I’m drawn to certain shapes and colors. I believe that once I start to design (fabric, quilts, my living room makeover) that swirling mix of images comes out as a beautiful idea. But it was started by me stirring up the pot since the last time I worked on a project.

One of my biggest inspirations for quilt designs are antique quilts. I can’t get enough of them. The old quilts inspire me and make me feel connected to all the quilters who came before me. So when I design my quilts I’m pulling from the masters but make them all my own.

**Paula Nadelstern:** Although my everyday life often rushes past the particulars, my creative life celebrates them. For me, art is in the details and



my fabric collections are all about the details.

I try to render the glassy, crystalline quality of a kaleidoscope into my fabric designs. Kaleidoscopes rely on the reflection of light rays from the mirrors. When you look into one end, your eye intercepts light that entered the opposite end and is then reflected one or more times from the mirrors. Choosing fabrics that evoke a sense of shading and transparency creates the translucent nature of a scope's interior on a quilt's flat surface.

My goal is to design beautiful stuff that can be used in myriad ways for anyone's piecing adventure, not just to be used to make kaleidoscopic designs. I welcome color and motif inspiration whenever I'm lucky enough to notice it: an elevator door, a set of Italian dishes, a snowflake, a painting at the Met.

**Lonni:** It's still a mystery to me why certain things catch my attention at certain times. It might be that I'm reading a book, looking through a magazine, talking with a colleague or customer, or listening to music. An idea will come floating through

my awareness; I catch hold of the thought and wonder "what if?" then I grab my journal or sketchbook and start thinking, drawing, and writing.

Inspiration does not just arrive and knock you over the head. You have to be open to it, look for it, want it.

### How do you go about designing the fabric?

**Pat:** My process is to collect images I love, go through my sketchbooks for drawings, look at color combinations. Then I start to formulate an idea. From my collected notes I start to get a main design.

After I have an idea for the main print in the line, I build companion prints to go with it. Each line has a certain number of different patterns, usually between five and nine. I make more than will be needed so that there is some room to work and change the designs.

This is then sent to the artist at P&B with whom I work. We start to pick and choose and change. At this point it's a collaborative effort, as they are trained textile designers and I'm the quilter on the team. I know how I want to use the designs and

Fabrics from Lonni Rossi's *Mariposa* collection, an homage to the glorious colors and delightful designs of the butterfly.

what images are appealing to me. I also know what will look great cut up into tiny pieces.

We email images back and forth until the line is developed. Then we move to color.

We generally pick three or four main colors, then work those into and through all the designs so as many pieces can work together as possible. I also strive to have one fabric line work with the previous, at least for some of the pieces.

**Paula:** I like an eclectic mix; whether fabrics belong to different styles or are intrinsically compatible is not an issue for me. Over the years, I've developed a vocabulary to describe the personality and function of the fabrics I design. This personal lexicon divides fabric into two main categories: *prima donnas* and *all-overs*. When I start thinking about a new collection, my intent is to include both categories.





Fabrics from Pat Sloan's Americana-themed *Sweet Liberty* collection.

To get a kaleidoscopic effect, my *modus operandi* is to camouflage seams. Since the key to this technique is choosing background colors that blend, I always use black or a dark color as the ground cloth. Colors like black, indigo, forest green, and wine tend to blend smoothly into each other.

Working with Benartex, most collections include around 28 SKUs ("shop keeping units"). This means a collection might be five patterns in five colorways or six patterns in four colorways with a couple of extra colorways of a pattern. This is decided toward the end when it is determined which patterns were more successful.

**Lonni:** I start with one small idea, theme, or motif, and expand on it. There are two ways that I have been working to create my fabrics.

Scenario one: Using my designed motifs, I create silk-screen images in a number of scale and pattern variations and begin painting the fabric like a piece of art, adding layers and trying different combinations of pattern, color, and texture. I keep working in this manner until I have four to six pieces of fabric that work well together. This group is then sent to Andover for review.

Scenario two is all digital and somewhat less hands-on for me, since I'm not painting actual pieces of fabric. I still create the motifs as before, and I work with them on my computer until I have really good black-and-white images which I can then upload to Andover. The difference here is that we do all the work of layering, scaling, patterning, and coloring on the computer. We print out paper proofs and color correct at this stage rather than at the strike-off stage.

Each collection will have anywhere from 8-12 different motifs or combinations/layers of motifs, and at least

four colorways. So there will be 10, 18 or 24 SKUs in a collection.

### How do customers use your fabrics?

**Pat:** Most of my customers are quilters, since my fabric is sold in quilt stores and at online stores marketing to quilters. Besides quilts, I've seen home decor items like table runners, placemats, pillows, valances, and bags.

**Lonni:** Customers use my printed fabrics in many different ways. When I create quilt patterns, I try to make them simple, easy to finish, and a vehicle to show off the fabrics. It always amazes me how creative quilters and crafters are — they often use my fabrics in ways I would never have thought of.

### How are the fabrics marketed?

**Pat:** P&B markets the fabrics through print advertisements, sales reps who visit stores, and emails to the shops. I market to quilters through my website, a newsletter, the Facebook community, my blog, and my forum — pretty much everywhere.

See "Commercial fabric" on page 39

Fabrics designed by Paula Nadelstern for Benartex.



# PAM review committee: First year reflections

by Leni Levenson Wiener

A little more than a year ago, Sally Sellers, Linda Beach, and I were asked to serve on the newly formed PAM review committee. As part of this start-up committee, it was our job to review potential candidates and make a decision whether or not to accept the artist as a professional artist member—a job we took very seriously. We discussed applications at length, always trying to keep our personal taste out of the discussion and focus on the professionalism of the artist's work and resume until we came to a consensus with which we were all comfortable. We were thrilled to offer an artist the opportunity to become a PAM, and it was always difficult to turn someone down.

Applications were denied for various reasons, but the most common included:

- The applicant did not provide all the required components for our review.
- The body of work submitted was not consistent. So often, artists submit a range of work, but in order to be considered a PAM, the review committee needs to see a clear and distinct artistic voice.
- The techniques used were not explained, which often meant that we were not able to fully understand what we were seeing.
- The quality of the work was not ready to be considered professional.
- The work submitted was more than a few years old, and, although one or two older pieces can fit into a

body of work, it's important to show the review committee what the artist is currently doing.

- The resume included only local and/or non-juried exhibitions.
- The images provided did not show the edges of the work, which can tell the review committee a lot about workmanship.
- The work submitted did not meet the SAQA definition of an art quilt.

Professional resumes and artist statements are another common problem. Although a final decision never rested on these alone, a well-written artist statement and resume could often answer questions and allow us to accept an application that might otherwise have been rejected. An artist statement should be no more than a paragraph and should include statements like "I work solely in black and white because it isolates the design," or "my work addresses mark-making and how it communicates meaning," as opposed to information on specific pieces. There is no place in an artist statement for where one grew up, whose workshops one has taken, or how many children one has. It is much more professional to keep it short, to the point, and in the first person.

As the inaugural committee, we also established a working method for future review committees. We have now retired from our posts and the committee has been turned over to Deidre Adams, Anna Hergert, and Barbara McKie. Committee membership will change each year.

In the past few years, since the PAM requirements were changed, there has been a lot of confusion and hesitation about applying. The frustrations we experienced in evaluating applications made it clear that there was a need for a mentorship program for potential PAM candidates to guide them through the process. This would obviously benefit the applicants, but would also save the committee time spent on applications that were incomplete or reviewing artists who simply were not ready.

As a result, Linda Beach and I have volunteered to become PAM submission mentors. As members of the original PAM review committee, we have firsthand experience and knowledge about what the committee wants—and needs to see—in order to make a decision, as well as where the common mistakes and pitfalls lie.

The role of the PAM submission mentors is to:

- Help an artist establish whether or not she/he is ready to apply to be a PAM, or what goals must be achieved in order to be ready in the future.
- Make recommendations not only on which work to submit, but just as importantly, what not to include.
- Assist with a professional resume and artist statement.
- Review application materials to make sure everything is complete and presented in the most professional manner.

See "PAM review committee" on page 36

# Corporate art commissions

by Lucinda Carlstrom

**F**or over 30 years I have actively sought corporate art commissions. The first gallery I showed in asked me to make an art collage for a bank. I thought this was a great idea — people who buy artwork were paying me to make what they wanted. What could be easier? Now as I look back after some 250 or so commissions, I can say that while most of them have been easy, more than a few have caused me to contemplate pulling my teeth out with pliers.

As contemporary art quilters, we produce work that gives us a unique advantage when working with architects, designers, and art representatives. We make art and craft at the same time. Our work is both contemporary and traditional, and fiber arts humanize cold spaces. Currently there is a desire, particularly in healthcare facilities, for objects that portray the natural environment. Certain colors and shapes have been found to calm people who have to wait for long periods of time in waiting rooms. Properly chosen art aids in the patient's feeling of well-being and can be therapeutic. In corporate spaces, designs that complement the firm's brand are very popular.

There are many ways to secure a corporate commission. I often work with a corporate art consultant or an art rep. Art reps generally work with interior designers, architects, space planners, and others to help choose appropriate artwork for an architectural project. This group transforms a raw space into a comfortable environment for their clients' employees, patients, and visitors. Corporate art

reps can be found in most medium and larger-sized cities, certainly in the major business and fashion areas such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, New York, Boston, Atlanta, and Miami. Finding an art rep is different from finding a gallery or show. Art reps are occasionally listed on the Internet but mainly tend to be associated with galleries that do a lot of framing. They are also friends of architects, space planners, commercial interior design firms, and more of the less glamorous art world. Art reps are more likely to be found in the business section than in the art section of the Sunday newspaper.

Galleries are another way to secure commissions, especially "working" art galleries — those that concentrate on framing and supply most of the artwork for hotels and hospitals. They are capable of turning out as many as 2,400 individually framed pieces of art and storing them until a project is completed and the art is hung. They rarely seek publicity, don't have fancy addresses, shows, or openings, and don't appear on the "hot" list around town. These galleries don't generally seek artists. Architects and interior designers rely on art reps they like working with and will not work directly with artists. Most large architectural firms have in-house interior designers on their staffs. The architects don't have time to pick out all the bathroom colors and doorknobs, but they still want their imprint on the whole project. They want the finished building to project their vision and to make sure it flows from one area to another, has

a consistent feeling throughout, and is of the quality they specify. They control this through a staff member or through an affiliation with an interior space planner, designer, or art rep they trust.

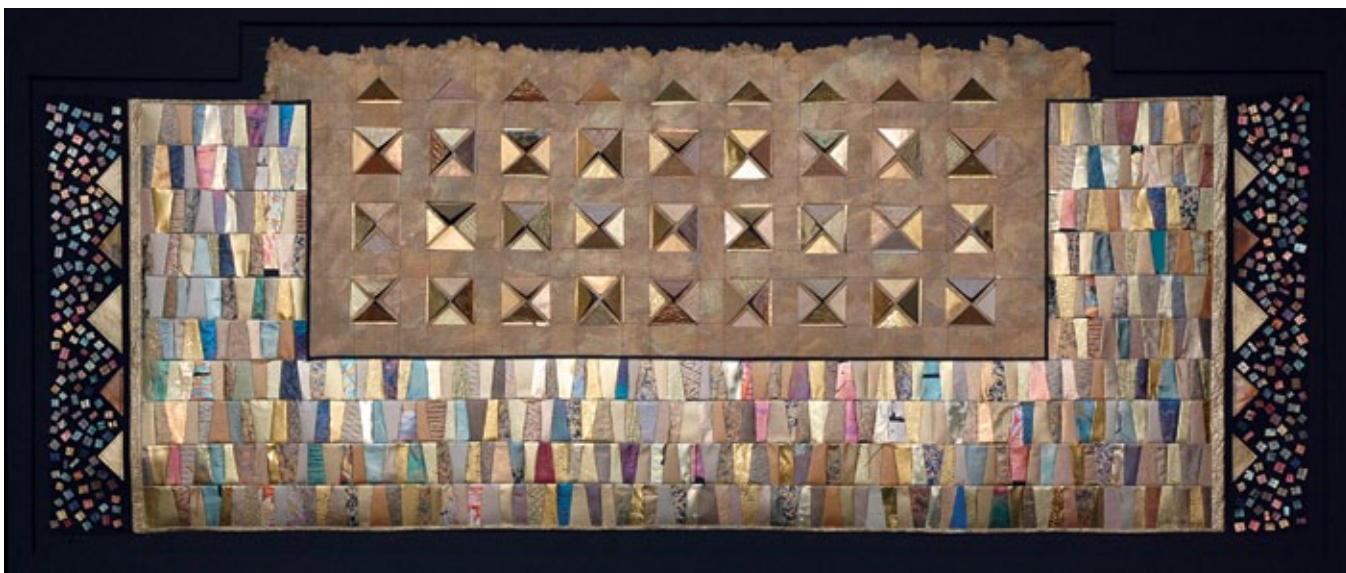
Because of the many layers of a project and the number of people involved, working with a corporation can be a lengthy process. Some projects begin a year in advance, often starting with the art rep creating a slide show or a portfolio for the corporate client to get a feel for what they would like to see in the space.

Different venues request different kinds of commissions. In the case of large hospitals, a theme is often chosen. The process starts with a color board of samples of paint, fabrics, carpet, wallpaper. If there's an art rep on the project, she will know which areas are being considered for artwork, the placement of furniture and built-in items, the wall coverings and colors of paint that will be used, the carpet and flooring to be used, and the budget. Every project has a budget and that budget includes framing, protection, and installation.

Corporations don't buy artwork that will be distracting to their occupants and clients. While a signature piece of art may be quite flashy in the lobby, artwork needs to fit in and flow when you get to the other areas of the building. If there's a theme for the collection, all the pieces need to work together and have a common thread, such as subject, identity, or color.

Healthcare facilities have to be especially careful about the type of art they display. For example, they might





**Power of Gold – Gold** 21 x 59 inches ©Lucinda Carlstrom Collection of GLC Enterprises, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

not want to put paintings of happy, healthy children everywhere, because a parent with a desperately ill child might be offended or hurt. Art with more universal themes is likely to be accepted more readily than art that conveys political or religious beliefs. Humorous work or art that makes a strong personal statement probably won't be embraced.

Spirituality is a theme that I've used for several pieces. Unlike "religion," "spirituality" is a word that can mean many different things. I recently did a project for a chapel space in a hospital where several different groups used the room for meditation and prayer. The art selection committee originally wanted abstractions of all of the major religious symbols in the piece. I couldn't fit every religious symbol into one design, so the committee changed the scope to be something more universal.

The size of the art is also important. With corporate commissions, you are generally dealing with large spaces. A minimum size is about 30 x 30 inches. If you can't work large (at least 36 x 48 inches), work in sets of smaller pieces that can be hung together to create a grouping to accommodate a larger space.

Generally, fiber art is sewn by hand to linen-covered acid-free foamboard and then framed with matting, wooden frames and Plexiglas. Part of the art rep's job is to coordinate the total presentation, including framing. Framing gives the piece a professional finish and sets the quilts off as fine art. This protects the client's investment.

Once your drawing and proposal are accepted, you'll receive a deadline and a deposit. If you don't work well with deadlines, can't follow your own directions or the art rep's specifications, or don't deliver the quality they expect, chances are you won't be called upon again. If you deliver something truly wonderful, you'll be remembered for the next job.

It's important to have a portfolio. I generally customize my presentation depending on the client or type of project. I send five photos of artwork installed in hospital or hotel lobbies to show how the art looks in those spaces. Two more photos are individual pieces of artwork, perhaps with a detail of my most outstanding pieces. I include my Quilt National entry with a little photo of the catalog book cover. The presentation I mail to new art reps and galleries includes photos,

a CD slideshow (80 different images), a resume with my artist's statement, and samples of materials. I use Japanese papers, 23k gold leaf, and new and recycled silk (old kimonos and thrift store dresses). I include sample blocks and scraps leftover from previous quilts, which I staple to my photos.

I photograph my quilts on black, then I crop and fix all of my images. I leave about a 3/8-inch black border around all the photo prints. For each image page, I include my name, website, and telephone number above the image, and the title, size, year completed, and a brief description below. I update art reps with whom I have a good relationship a couple times a year with new images by e-mail, and I update others by sending additional photographs by mail. Be sure your name, website, and phone number are on every piece of paper you send out.

I don't include prices. I have an established retail price per square foot and a percentage discount (wholesale price) for galleries and art reps. They make their profit from your discount to them as a wholesaler. This can vary from 10% to 50%.

See "Corporate commissions" on page 37

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## Rejection from page 9

I apply to exhibitions. I often feel terrible when I have to write to someone and say their work didn't fit into the exhibition. But I always tell them that their work is good (if it is), to resubmit to another exhibition (sometimes even suggesting the exhibition), and to keep in contact for the next exhibition. I will comment to artists who send in bad images of their work which include their cats, hands, and even an occasional cow. I told one artist that his work was wonderful but the images were faded and not up to his potential (he also had dirty dishes in the background). He resubmitted with a new series of shots and eventually got into another exhibition.

Never give up hope that your work will be exhibited. A good place to start is to approach your local library

and ask if they'd like you to hang a display of fiber arts in the building. Libraries love free art, and my library now features different artists each month in the hallway. They put up display boards in the reading area for our fiber arts. You can then stand around and listen to the comments, which is not only satisfying to the soul, but also gives you credentials on your resume and more confidence in your work. Then later, when you get a rejection letter, you can shrug it off and consider that the juror probably had a bad day or lack of insight. Good luck! ▼

*SAQA Florida representative and professional artist member Mary McBride lives in DeLand, Florida. Her website is [marymcbridearts.homestead.com](http://marymcbridearts.homestead.com).*



## The Winner's Secret

**Matilda's own**

### Wool Batting

**Mariya Waters, Melbourne Australia**  
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# Web publishing

from page 17

## 6. Time management

Have a plan. Get in, get out.

- The initial organization (or reorganization) of your website will take a little time, as it should be done thoughtfully. Allow 20-40 hours to be spread over one month. Write the deadline on your calendar and commit to meeting it. This site will represent you, so make sure first impressions are a Wow! and that functionality and navigation are effortless.
- Allow 5-10 hours every week for updates. Give yourself a written checklist of promotional tasks that you follow each week. This includes writing blog articles, updating forums, uploading photography, connecting through social media, and responding to emails. Set a

time of day that you're going to be online, and get it done in 2-3 sessions per week.

## 7. Track your results

Set realistic expectations and allow your statistics to improve over time. You can monitor visits to your website and blog via WordPress.com's dashboard. The first blog article I wrote got three visits. Now, six months later, I can expect anywhere from 75-125 visitors in a week. In the beginning, most visitors came from Facebook or Constant Contact emails. Now, I'm beginning to see visitors coming from Twitter, Google, and links from other blogs.

In addition to visits to your site, what are your expectations of online exposure?

- Sales? Be sure to gear the content of your website and blog towards purchasing from you.
- Influence? Think about how your point of view can impact those who read you and make them want to pass your words and ideas forward.
- Conversation and/or critique? Make sure you encourage comments on your work, and then go comment on other people's work.

Lastly, add me to your mailing list! I would love to see your work. Cynthia Long, [cyn@sugarsmash.com](mailto:cyn@sugarsmash.com). ▼

*SAQA active member Cynthia Long is a branding strategist with SugarSmash Creative, [www.sugarsmash.com](http://www.sugarsmash.com). She lives in Walnut Creek, California. Her art quilt website is [cynartquilts.com](http://cynartquilts.com).*

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## Visioning Project from page 19

### Felisa Lyons

La Habra Heights, California

Last summer, I realized that I needed more studio time in order to grow and develop my art. I also knew it might be helpful to have a support group. A few days later I saw the description of the Visioning Project on the SAQA website: a year-long project with each of us establishing our own goals. I signed up immediately. I worked out my goals on the wiki page provided, committed to supporting the other Visioning Project members, and began working in my studio daily.

It's the commitment to others that keeps me working, no matter how life, work, or family may get in the way. Posting my progress and photos creates an invaluable record of work

and thoughts. Participants visit, offering support or suggestions. Reading other members' pages also keeps me on track. I see their struggles, their solutions, and their work, and I feel the members' pool of support all around.

I've found that creating is a stress-buster. Working daily has become a meditative experience, leading me mentally to remarkable places. Though I'm in the studio only a few hours, I've created almost as many quilts since joining the Visioning Project as I had in the previous five years. The discipline of visioning brings expansion into my life and structure into my pursuit of art. Thank you to Lisa Chipetine and all who provide such a supportive structure. It's a joy being a part of this group. ▼

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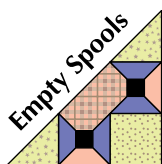
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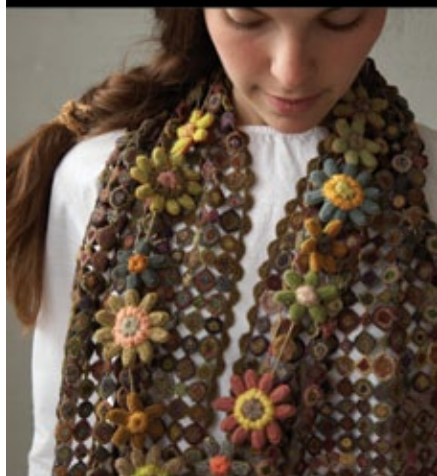
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## International teaching

from page 23

private homes—some luxurious, some basic, some like home. Besides the rewards of teaching what they love, these traveling art quilters can also enjoy the stimulation and excitement every tourist feels when visiting foreign places.

The length of time they spend in a foreign country is anywhere from a week to a month or two. They can get homesick, though Karen says, "In the long run, the pleasures and experience of traveling far outweigh any inconveniences and challenges."

It's not very different teaching in a foreign country. The lessons are the same ones taught at home, and

quilters are the same all over the world. "A quilter is a quilter no matter where she lives," muses Sarah.

"Isn't quilt teaching the most marvelous career? How else could we travel so much, meet so many fine people, see so many marvelous things and have so much fun earning money?" Dena Crain heard this sentiment over and over from the other teachers while she was in New Zealand recently. "For me," she says, "that pretty well sums it up." ▼

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

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## SAQA CREAM Award

### Quilt Visions 2010: No Boundaries

#### Dianne Firth

Mountains provide a physical boundary that often divides regions. Access routes, such as roads, break down this division and provide new opportunities for people and places.

The idea for this work came from reflecting upon the worldwide refugee crisis. In Australia, where I live, most refugees come by sea. However, before they get to their boats many have had to cross mountains. Mountains are the borders that have to be crossed to find a new world.

In using a fluid line down the center of the quilt and different tones of gold and gray on either side, I am trying to evoke the sense of moving along a ridgeline. The gold can reference the desert, but is used also as the color of hope.

*The SAQA CREAM Award is given to recognize excellent work by an artist who has been juried into this prestigious exhibition for the first time. This CREAM Award was funded by donations from members of SAQA's Northern California region in memory of Eva Henneberry.*

## PAM review committee

from page 29

It's important to remember that as mentors, we can never guarantee that our advice will lead to an acceptance as a PAM. We can only make recommendations and suggestions based on our prior experience on the PAM review committee. We have no way of knowing how the current committee will vote on any candidate, and there is no contact between the PAM submission mentors and PAM review committee regarding potential submissions. Information and materials shared with us, as well as all communication between the artist and the mentors, remains strictly confidential.

Of course, the final decision about whether or not to submit an

application falls to the artist alone. Assistance by the PAM submission mentors is not required, nor will those who do not need our help be at any disadvantage. But for those who feel they would benefit from an honest evaluation and critique of their work to help determine their readiness, or for those who want help in preparing their submissions, assistance is available.

For more information on the requirements for PAM, please visit:

<http://www.saqau.wikispaces.net/Bus+Guidelines+for+PAM>

[http://www.saqau.com/members/PAM\\_Guidelines.aspx](http://www.saqau.com/members/PAM_Guidelines.aspx)

For current contact email addresses for the PAM submission mentors:

<http://www.saqau.wikispaces.net/PAM+Submission+Mentors>

The mentors are not involved with the technical side of the application process. For details about posting your application materials and images to the SAQA site, go to [www.saqau.com/membership.php?ID=460](http://www.saqau.com/membership.php?ID=460). ▼

*SAQA professional artist member Leni Levenson Wiener is a full time studio artist, instructor, and author living in New Rochelle, New York. Her website is [www.leniwiener.com](http://www.leniwiener.com) where she also maintains a blog.*

## Corporate commissions

from page 31

Corporate commissions can be challenging, and they may or may not be for you. I admit I hated doing a few of them, but I love walking into buildings and seeing my work still in the lobby after 20 years. People walk up to me at art shows and say, "Did you make the artwork in the Queen Building in Atlanta? I enjoy it every day when I go to work."

I'm a one-person studio. My goal is to make quality objects that will survive the test of time. I'm truly fortunate that I love my work and have been doing it for 35 years. The current times are challenging for artists, but commissions for new buildings are starting to pick up and the future for art quilts is strong. ▼

*SAQA active member Lucinda Carlstrom has been exhibiting for 35 years, primarily in major art festivals. A graduate of the Atlanta College of Art, she maintains her studio in Atlanta. Her website is [www.lucindacarlstrom.com](http://www.lucindacarlstrom.com).*

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## Tall Girl

from page 15

of being cast aside by my family for going public with this forbidden tale. When I wanted to give up, I focused on how far I had already come and just kept moving forward.

By the end of 2008, I was four pieces shy of my goal of twenty and just wanted it done. I had healed my body and psyche, yet this project lumbered on. As I wrote my annual list of art goals for the new year, it was all *Tall Girl Series* — finish the artwork, publish the book, develop the lecture, write an exhibition proposal and market it. However, with the list completed, adrenaline kicked in and I quickly designed the remaining work.

The debut exhibition for the *Tall Girl Series: A Body of Work* was in the Wiseman Gallery at Rogue Community College, Grants Pass, Oregon,

in February 2010. It was especially gratifying for me to see 15 of the 23 pieces exhibited together. I felt enormously proud for having the courage to do this work, see it to fruition, and get it out into the world. The affirming reactions of those who've seen the work and/or my presentation and book have been incredibly healing, an antidote for my lifetime of silence.

I compiled a marketing packet for the series with advertising, press coverage and comments from the debut exhibition, CD, artist statement, and resume. I have sent it out to over 30 venues to date. The book is for sale on my website at [www.live2dye.com](http://www.live2dye.com), and I offer it whenever there is a *Tall Girl Series* lecture and/or exhibit.

When I began this project, I didn't know how my initial intention to

share and educate others would reflect on me. Through this series, I bear witness to the resiliency of the human spirit, my own dogged determination in living through it, and the courage to speak out.

My creativity level for new artwork has soared. Where once I was driven by anger, sadness, and pain, I'm now empowered by the knowledge that I can do anything to which I set my mind. As for my father, who now lives with dementia, he has not only forgotten the surgeries but also his role in them. It's probably just as well. ▼

SAQA professional artist member Carol Larson is the curator of *Points of View* and past Northern California-Nevada rep for SAQA. See her work at [www.live2dye.com](http://www.live2dye.com). To learn more about the *Tall Girl Series: A Body of Work*, visit [www.live2dye.com/tallgirl.html](http://www.live2dye.com/tallgirl.html).

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## Commercial fabric

from page 28

**Paula:** The team at Benartex manages all of the aspects of marketing for me.

**Lonni:** Andover puts each designer's fabric on their website and features the free-to-use pattern for each collection as well. They place print advertising in a number of national and international quilting magazines and lately have been videotaping all our Schoolhouse lectures and putting them on YouTube. Andover also promotes each new collection through their team of sales representatives across the United States and by attending various trade shows throughout the year, in addition to Spring and Fall Quilt Market. The fabrics are marketed in Europe by Andover's sister company, Makower UK.

### Do you make sample garments or quilts to showcase your fabrics?

**Pat:** I always make up a quilt and some other projects from each line of fabric. These are shown at the trade shows and then go into magazines, books, and single patterns. P&B and I offer a free design for each of my fabric lines. These are at the P&B website and on my website. P&B often asks other quilt pattern designers to make a piece with my fabric, as this gives a wider range of styles and shows people how amazing the fabric is when used in different projects.

**Paula:** When time permits, yes. The point of designing fabric is to sell fabric and a simple quilt pattern is the best tool for the quilt world to answer that inevitable "What do you do with it?"

Marketing is timed for the Spring or Fall Quilt Markets. A limited amount of fabric is air-freighted to be used as samples and headers for Market, in my case from Korea. You can imagine the logistics at that point, especially if I'm away on a teaching trip.

I have devised a couple of simple techniques or quilt patterns that work with symmetrical fabrics. Many of these are one-day classes I teach. Eventually I make up these tried-and-true patterns using the fabrics from the new collection. ▼

*SAQA active member and fiber artist Colleen Ansbaugh lives in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. She is a graduate of the University of Minnesota in Textiles and Clothing and has ten years' experience in the cut-and-sew industry developing industrial fabrics. Colleen's quilts and wearable art can be found in various galleries in Wisconsin.*



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To find out more about SAQA, contact Martha Sielman, executive director, (860) 487-4199; [msielman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:msielman@sbcglobal.net); or visit our website at [www.saqa.com](http://www.saqa.com). Annual membership: active (US and international) \$60, professional artist members \$125; student (full-time, with copy of ID) \$30.

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: January 1  
Fall: April 1  
Winter: July 1  
Spring: October 1

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