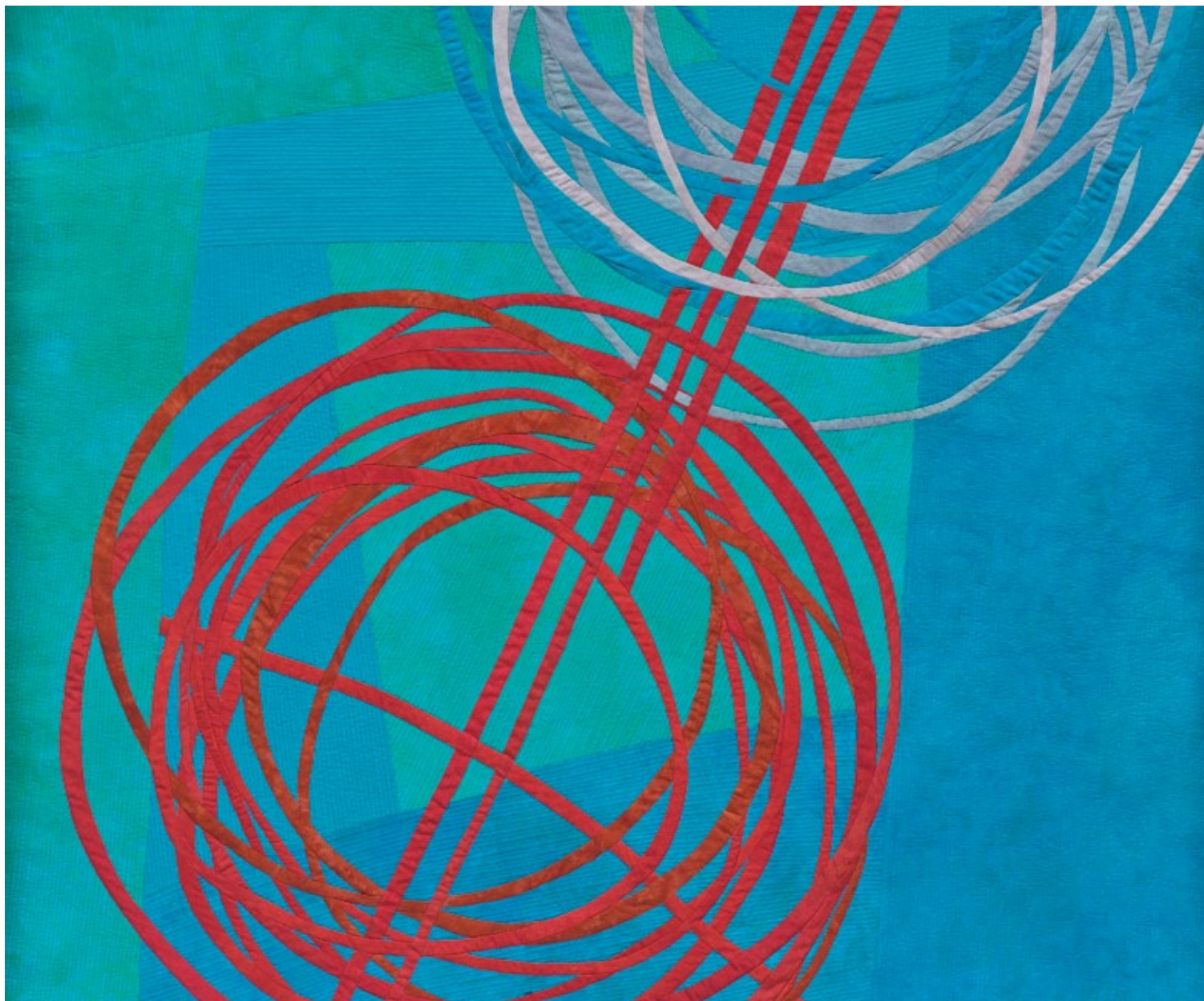


SAQQA *Journal*

Studio Art Quilt Associates, Inc. ▲▲▲ Volume 21, No.2 ▲▲▲ Summer 2011



Circles No. 4
39 x 35 inches
by Judy Kirpich
see page 40

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Thoughts from the president

by Sandra Sider

SAQA's Endowment Fund: looking to the future



Let's take a trip into the future, to the year 2039, when SAQA will celebrate its 50th anniversary. Assuming we can raise \$150,000 for SAQA's

endowment fund during this fund drive (and thank you to everyone who has already responded — we now have pledges and donations of over \$125,000), and that we allow a portion of the earnings to grow each year, we're looking forward to some exciting financial possibilities by the time of our celebration. By 2039, the

initial seed money for the endowment could grow to total more than \$400,000.

What are some of the wonderful things that could be possible in the future which we cannot afford to do today? To help SAQA artists, it might be possible to collaborate with major museums to help them acquire studio art quilts via a special purchase fund. We might help pay some of the conference expenses for graduate students or SAQA regional representatives or set up a fellowship fund for scholars studying quilt art. SAQA could create an annual prize for the best book or article published on quilt art, or establish a new biennial international juried exhibition. SAQA

might also be able to assist in repairing quilt studios damaged by disasters and to contribute to restocking tools and supplies for artists in need.

Eventually, SAQA may have to open a separate office instead of operating out of the executive director's home. That expense could be partially paid for by earnings from the endowment fund. Impossible today, but not in the future. That is what an endowment fund is about—possibilities.

You have received the endowment appeal letter sent out earlier this year. The pledge of matching funds of up to \$50,000 from our major donors is a compelling incentive to contribute. And don't forget—your contribution can be spread over three years.

Letter from the editor

by Carolyn Lee Vehslage



You might be interested to know how an article gets in the *Journal*. As managing editor, I originate topics or take suggestions from

SAQA members, then I seek out a writer for the topic. When the article comes to me, I edit it for grammatical standards and then pass it on for more editing.

We have recently hired Vivien Zepf to be our associate editor. Vivien

comes to us with quite a bit of writing and editing experience.

Often, Vivien will contact a writer directly for clarification or to gather more information. Vivien makes her edits through the Microsoft Word's Track Changes feature, and I then accept or override the changes. I want to make sure that the voice of the writer still comes through.

Next, the articles are given a final proof before sending them on to our designer, Deidre Adams, for layout. We then ask the writers to submit images to Deidre. (She needs all images to be at least 1800 pixels on

the longest side for print quality.) After layout, the *Journal* goes through a few more rounds of proofing before going to the printer. The whole cycle, including printing and mailing, takes three months.

We welcome article suggestions and submissions. Please send comments to me at clvquilts@yahoo.com.

Thanks to Deidre Adams for our new staff photos.

Don't forget to bid on your favorite piece in the 2011 Benefit Auction beginning Sept. 12, 2011.

www.saqa.com > Benefit Auction

Report from the SAQA executive director

by Martha Sielman



I want to share with you a few of the highlights of what I learned at the wonderful SAQA Visioning Conference held at the Brown Palace Hotel in

Denver. The Brown Palace hotel is an amazing building with a stained glass ceiling, wrought iron railings, and high tea. The hotel staff was wonderful to work with. SAQA's planning committees put together an inspiring line-up of events and speakers, and conference coordinator Desi Vaughn did an incredible job keeping everything organized and running smoothly.

I wasn't able to attend all of the

mini-workshops, so I missed several which got very good reviews: Valarie Poitier's "Promote Your Work without Apologizing," Carol Larson's "REJECTED: Common Mistakes when entering Juried Shows," Regina Benson's "Self-Promotion with Pizzazz," and Katie Pasquini Masopust's "The Teaching Circuit: Is it for you?"

However, I was able to attend the rest of the mini-workshops. Dana Jones provided excellent pointers on getting your articles printed in magazines:

- Understand that what you want to write is not necessarily what magazines are looking to print.
- Read several issues of a magazine to find out what types of articles they want.

- Consider that magazines are looking for website content, e-news, and video content, as well as traditional print articles.
- Submit a query to see if the magazine is interested before writing the entire article. (And don't forget to submit ideas to our own SAQA *Journal!*)

Dr. Monica Dixon gave advice on making your life more balanced and healthy to fuel your creativity:

- Follow Michael Pollan's mantra: Eat real food, but not too much. Eat mostly plants, consuming 80% of your food before 4pm. Limit "bad food" to 20% of what you eat. Mix your diet with ¼ protein, ¼ starch, ½ fruits and vegetables.

continued on next page

Board report by Linda Colsh, secretary



Analyzing the outcome of member surveys, along with keeping an eye on trending topics in the Yahoo! group and networking

with members at our annual conferences, are among the ways that the board listens to the membership.

Pokey Bolton suggested increasing our use of surveys. The Internet has made survey-taking very easy to set up and tabulate. One important recent survey was to find out how the membership believes "art quilt" should be defined. The board is still

working to analyze the results of this survey.

Your opinion counts. SAQA has had high response rates, but we want to hear everyone's opinions. We keep the surveys short, so they require only a few minutes of your time. Suggestions and complaints are heard and considered. When you receive a SAQA survey, either by email or in one of SAQA's e-publications, such as the *Art Quilt News* or the *e.Bulletin*, please take a few minutes to fill it out and send it off—it's in your interest to be heard, as well as in SAQA's interest to have broad data from the membership to guide us. Thanks to every one of you who takes a few minutes to complete our surveys.

The information gathered in SAQA's surveys has recently been put to use by the Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) chaired by Vice President Kris Sazaki. The LRPC is working to define plans for the next five years. The committee is using our last long range plan developed in 2008 as a reference point for the 2011 plan. The new plan will also include results from the membership-wide survey on exhibits, data from telephone surveys of our regional representatives and others, along with research into the areas important to SAQA, including marketing, education, operations, and a host of other subjects. This new plan will cover an important time of growth for our organization.



Charlotte Ziebarth discusses her process during Friday morning's panel discussion.

(Panel, left to right: Deidre Adams, Carol Watkins, Charlotte Ziebarth, Martha Sielman.)

- Recognize that creativity requires good food, rest, mindfulness, connections, exercise, and fresh air.
- Have faith in your creativity. Don't listen to the judgmental voice in your head; break the rules and ask penetrating "What if?" questions.
- Connect with others to build your life to the fullest.

Gregory Case shared tips on taking successful photos for juried shows:

- Photoshop can't rescue a bad photograph so practice, practice, practice.
- Your camera's manual is a great resource; you have to learn what your camera can and can't do.
- A tripod and timer are essential tools for taking crisp photos.
- Correct white balance is crucial. Use custom white balance rather than auto white balance.
- For raw files, use a slight overexposure to get good white highlights.

Kris Sazaki and Deb Cashatt, the Pixeladies, offered suggestions on using Photoshop Elements' layering tools:

- Most artists don't need the full

Photoshop program; Photoshop Elements is ample.

- The **Constrain Proportions** option should always be checked when resizing photos.
- Each layer should have a name so you can remember what you've added.

Aside from attending mini-workshops, I also had the pleasure of moderating the first panel discussion about the artworks of three Colorado artists. Though their artwork is very different, each of the artists on the panel—Deidre Adams, Carol Watkins, and Charlotte Ziebarth—is an avid photographer and uses her photos for inspiration. Each of the panelists takes many photographs each year but produces only ten to twelve artworks in that same time period. Deidre spoke about the effect Colorado's wide, vast horizon—where you can "see for miles and miles"—has on her work. Carol also said that space was important in her work. Charlotte added that it's important always to remember that "Mountains don't care. Nature is in control."

Luana Rubin's keynote address at Friday's lunch was amazing. Her life has already been filled with

an incredible number of unusual events—and she's only 51. Always interested in fashion, she sold her cello to attend design school. At just 22, she was hired away from her first job to accept a dream opportunity in Hong Kong: designing a full runway line. At 25, she moved to New York and became an import designer as well as a jewelry line creator. When she moved back to Boulder, Colorado, she took up portraiture and plein air painting. It was in Colorado that Luana discovered quilting. She founded eQuilter in 1999, operating out of her basement, to provide unusual fabrics to other quilters. She now runs the business (which has 37 employees and donates 2% of all sales to charity), designs fabric lines, leads fabric travel adventures, and serves on the board of the Color Marketing Group. (I'm sure I've missed several key achievements and talents). Luana's advice: Always learn something new, take yourself on artist dates, find your weaknesses and challenge them, look for beauty everywhere, be a mentor to others, and set high goals, but stay focused on the path you're currently taking.

The last conference event on Friday was a five-expert panel discussion about curating exhibitions with Peg Keeney, Jacquie Atkins, Linda Colsh, Pat Gould, and Judith Trager. The large number of decisions and details that are involved in curating any exhibition quickly became clear. Each exhibit includes planning the concept (and choosing a title), studying the space (including where the doors, windows, outlets, columns, etc. are

placed), choosing the objects, designing their placement, checking the traffic flow (including handicapped access), writing and printing the signage, installation, and evaluation. Different types of exhibitions have different challenges, from international shipping to unusual materials to government regulations. The rewards of a successful installation and positive public feedback make it all worthwhile.

Friday evening, members of the Front Range Contemporary Quilters became chauffeurs and took multiple carpool groups out to see different exhibits in the surrounding area: *Sightlines*, installed at *Quilters Newsletter's* corporate headquarters; *Frontiers* at the Rocky Mountain Quilt Museum; and Carol Ann Waugh's show at the Ice Cube gallery. The exhibits were wonderful and the informal camaraderie of the carpools was a welcome change of pace from the frenetic activity of the conference.

Four artists who create three-dimensional quilted sculpture—Susan Else, Mary Beth Bellah, Carolyn Crump, and Jill Rumoshosky Werner—started off Saturday morning's panel discussion. Their take-home message: Think about how you're going to ship what you create. For example, one of Carolyn's pieces was juried into an exhibition at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago, but shipping it round-trip from Texas cost over \$2,000. Susan said, "There are no books on how to do this; it's all about problem-solving and trouble-shooting." Mary Beth cautioned, "It's difficult having curators understand your work, how to display it, and how to care for it." Susan said that she works in 3D because "Breaking one rule [that work had to be flat] freed my internal voice." But Jill cautioned, "Once you go 3D, it's very

hard to go back!"

Later in the day, Nancy Bavor gave a lecture on the importance of saving information about our work. Documenting our work is critical, and we should always save the following information about each piece: materials, techniques, preliminary notes and sketches, artist statement, and where the piece has been exhibited or published. Collateral data, such as your resume at the time the piece was made, should be documented as well. Nancy also stressed the importance of keeping multiple copies of all documentation in case of disasters. Keep three copies of anything important, saved on two kinds of media, and store one of them offsite. In addition, she urged us to plan now for what will happen to our "stuff" when we die and are no longer around to protect it from getting sent to Goodwill. It's imperative to protect our legacy.

The final keynote address was given by Dr. Alice Zrebiec, curator of textile art at the Denver Art Museum. Her lecture, "Fiber in the Fine Art World," stressed that museums define textiles in ever-changing ways. She noted that she often finds pieces for her exhibits catalogued in the Contemporary Art or Historical collections. The

Denver Art Museum owns 300 quilts, but Dr. Zrebiec's exhibitions focus on a broad range of textile art. Some of her most interesting comments were on the subject of labels, the brief statements appearing next to artwork. She said, "What does it matter what something's made of?" Instead, she prefers to have input from the artist as to the intent of the piece. She believes labels should be brief and point out just one or two things so viewers can discover connections on their own. She encouraged everyone to explore works in other mediums. She says, "Cross-pollination of mediums jumpstarts your creative thinking." To supplement her talk, Alice also gave two tours of the current textile exhibition, *Sleight of Hand*, at the museum on Sunday.

This was such an invigorating experience, and I hope you'll join us for the next SAQA conference March 30-April 1, 2012 in the greater Philadelphia area. It's a joint conference with Surface Design Association on the topic "Identity: Context and Reflection." We'll be attending the opening of *ArtQuilt Elements* and touring many of the exhibitions that are part of Fiber Philadelphia. See you there! ▼

Conference attendees enjoy the trunk show artworks.





Featured artist

Trisha Hassler

Forty years ago I took an industrial design class and did a project using fabric. The young man sitting next to me was working in sheet steel, and we were going through many of the same steps. I thought, “Shouldn’t the materials be interchangeable?” A little more than 25 years later, I finally got around to addressing that question. I had the great fortune to have a good friend with a complete metal shop. She showed me how to use the various tools, and it became obvious right away what I wanted to try. My initial pieces were very simple and the steel was just a frame. Now I’m making 3D sculpture that incorporates the steel in an active role. I’ve made over 200 pieces so far.

Before merging steel and fiber in my art, I was a photo stylist working with my photographer husband in our family-owned commercial photo studio. My specialty was off-figure fashion. I also created store displays.

I live in Oregon and rust grows really well here. The steel I use is left over from construction projects and left to weather out in the open. I go to the steelyard a few times a year and flip through the piles to see what’s there. Most steelyard customers want heavier pieces, so when there’s a pile of lightweight gauge, I take as much as I can manage. My personal rule is that I have to be able to move the pieces around by myself, since I’m usually working alone when I cut. Sometimes I’m invited to take a look at what others think of as a pile of junk. One such pile at an old ranch was a virtual gold mine. The ranch was destined to become a golf resort, so I’ve always felt like I rescued the treasures just in time. I have a few tractor hoods and a piece that’s a beautiful pea-green color. Although too heavy to manipulate, it’s got great rust patterns I can use for fabric impressions.

My husband and I live in a 1912 historic warehouse. It has been retrofitted and it’s great, but it was never built to house people so there are still heat challenges during the coldest winter days. My husband also has his studio in our warehouse. In this neighborhood, we have an interesting mix of old retrofitted warehouse living, new condos, apartments, restaurants, shops, galleries, and two major art schools.

My studio is very organized, with lots of surface area to lay out pieces. I don’t have a design wall, but I have lots of storage in the cabinets under the stairs. My husband also uses my studio space for



***So Tell Me Again Why We Need
All This Stuff Anyway?***

32 x 29 inches

©2010

photos by Tom Hassler



some light construction projects, since all the household tools are in one of my cabinets. My studio is right next to our living room, and since it's a loft with no walls, I keep the space neat so nothing is visually jarring. My studio has old brick walls, maple cabinets, black shelves, a large photographic print from a show of my husband's work, and a big window that faces west with a great view of the hills. I love the space, especially on a sunny afternoon.

The shop where I cut steel is at the home of a friend. He has been generous, allowing my rusty stuff to take up a spot by the large bay door. In good weather I can drag it all outside. In the cold or rain, I work inside and try to keep my mess to a minimum. I pay rent monthly and have my own key, so all that's required is a

phone call to be sure we're not both trying to use the shop at the same time. Since it's about 10 minutes from home, I can go for a few hours and still have my afternoon for other things.

I have all my own equipment, and I use a plasma cutter to cut the steel. The plasma cutting is all done freehand without templates. The plasma cutter is handheld like a glue gun, and I follow guidelines that I draw with soapstone. The results are rough and primitive. After I'm finished with the cutting torch, I clean each piece of steel by rubbing off all dirt, grease, and loose particles. Once done, each side is sealed with matte-finish polyurethane. This prevents the rust from migrating to the fabric or onto someone's wall. I only bring the pieces into my home studio after

they're sealed. I never add paint or other finishes to the metal; I use the metal as I find it. This is part of the challenge for me—to use a found metal patina that melds with my own fabrics. I don't want to work with the kinds of chemicals that would be necessary for patina steel. To date, all the metal I've worked with has been flat, but I'm doing a workshop this summer to learn more metal raising techniques.

My fabric is usually hand-dyed, then pieced, quilted, and heavily embellished. My dyeing techniques are pretty random and intuitive, and my results vary from time to time. I like to work with cottons and silks, and I often clamp rusty pieces of hardware onto the fabric to create an impression before using dye. I love indigo; the rich blues are a nice contrast to the rusts and the steel.

Unfortunately, I don't have a good place to dye at home. There's no work sink—just the kitchen and bathroom basins. I do, however, belong to a dye group. We don't meet regularly, but when a session is coming up, I work to prepare lots of fabric so I can have pieces in my stash for a while. I work small, so the fabric I use is mostly small and easy to manage.

Sometimes I work in a hand-printed monotype manner to get what I need to finish a piece. When I'm ready to begin, I start with a group of fabrics in the color palette I want to work in and randomly piece from the pile. It changes as it grows and I refine it as needed. Usually it doesn't follow the sketch exactly; I just let it come as it

continued on next page



Can't Live With 'Em, Can't Shoot 'Em

18 x38 inches ©2006

will. Once I'm working with the steel, I need to be more precise so that it all fits together in the end.

My work varies in size from simple small pieces worked in series to standalone pieces up to 3 x 5 feet. I have something in progress all the time. I alternate between 2D and 3D work, depending on my mood or upcoming show requirements. I use a sketchbook and usually work out my engineering challenges before I begin and then use the sketchbook again to look at embroidery decisions. Lately, I'm very interested in stitching, so each of my current pieces has become a layered surface for stitch marks. I often base my work on a nine-patch arrangement, and many of my pieces are constructed using a strong medalion style design.

The work I do is autobiographical and often relates to what's happening around me in the world or in my family. I think we would all benefit from making the connections we have stronger as well as looking for ways to make life a little more positive. I offer viewers a place to slow down, reflect, and just be for a while.

So Tell Me Again Why We Need All This Stuff Anyway was inspired by a major downsize we just came through. My husband and I went through a 64% reduction of our

living and working space. It was a positive decision and has turned out just great, but the last year-and-a-half has been full of difficult decisions. The segments of this piece represent boxes, tubs, and storage containers. Some are filled with treasures, some with junk, and much in between. As I carefully sorted and organized, it seemed like a tower of stuff was ready to topple any moment. It became important for me to categorize and make sense out of it all. This piece helped me do just that.

Can't Live With 'Em, Can't Shoot 'Em is about my family. Starting from the left, the group of three circles represents my brother, my sister, and me. We have different personalities but are cut from the same cloth. We're similar but different in our own expressions and mannerisms, as well as in our goals and dreams. The group of four circles to the right represents my own family: my son, my daughter, my husband, and me. We're compatible, and the youngest is still connected to us as parents. This is portrayed by threads that connect the two circles. Life with siblings and nuclear family members is not without challenges. The stitching represents our efforts to maintain our individual voices and hold our own in the group. The goal for me has

always been to honor the individual while seeking harmony (moments of harmony are placed around the edges of this piece) but sometimes patience runs short and tempers flare...hence the title.

The trio of box shaped pieces: *Don't Ask Me To Be Silent About Things That Matter, If I Repeat It Enough, Does That Mean It's True?* and *Why Do I Have To Be Lost Before I can Find Myself?* represents parental advice I hope my children have learned. The boxes represent nests, complete with eggs nestled carefully in the center of each spiny, protective border. These are my empty nest pieces—representations of conversations that I hope my children were listening to.

The connections in each of these three pieces are nuts and bolts. I use hardware so I can adjust a piece as I'm putting it together and make changes in the design if I want. If a piece isn't working, I take the fabric out and unbolt the frame to go back to the beginning. Usually, I adjust as I go along so I don't go too far without being happy with the direction. I do not solder or weld my pieces; I prefer the flexibility of cold joins, which have the advantage that I can dismantle the joints. I approach fabric in a similar way. The fabric in my pieces is laced together with waxed linen

and found objects that have holes. I sew the findings to the fabric and then string the pieces together. Some layers are pierced with a punch, so I use interfacing for stability. I like the air and space that is created between the dimensional layers.

Figuring out the engineering of how to support the weight of a piece is one of the biggest challenges of working the way I do. I like to use a strong piece of construction steel that I can suspend the work from. *Tell Me Again* is a fabric piece tied on all four sides to a stiff steel frame; the hanging positioning supports the weight. If the quilt were removed from the frame, it would be a miniature blanket, soft and pliable.

I'm currently working on a year-long series of monthly projects based on a personal theme. This is part of a four-woman group challenge, and at the end of the year we hope to have 48 smashing pieces of work from which to select an exhibition. I am using different construction materials and following a theme of "Letters Home" for the year. I'm making a house out of leather, a felted sweater, and I plan to use glass. I'm working out the engineering issues for each of these right now. I'm also writing directly on some steel for one of my new pieces. The other artists involved in the challenge are all friends working in different mediums — a painter, a jeweler, and a ceramist. Someday, I would like to do a series of steel books. It's all in my head for now, but I'm working out how to manage the construction of the steel pages.

My work is shown in a gallery owned and operated by a group of 15 artists in the Pearl District of Portland. In existence since 1992, it has quite a history and continues to be a supportive



Three Nests
each approx 6 x 6 x 6 inches
©2010

atmosphere for exhibitions, group shows, and guest offerings. A jurying process and acceptance by all members is necessary for membership. Each member is expected to commit to work a few days a month and to participate in marketing, hanging, operations, and meetings. The gallery has a great reputation in town and we are fortunate to get considerable traffic from visitors.

I am also on the board of Art In The Pearl, a three-day festival held every Labor Day weekend. As community liaison, I attend meetings, keep up on changes in the neighborhood, and make sure we're being good neighbors to the businesses and residences in the area near the festival. The festival often attracts crowds of close to 80,000 people, so it has an impact on those close by. I also show my work at the festival each year.

While I love the energy of festivals and the camaraderie with other artists, I've found festival sales to be weak. I had my best sales last year during a month-long gallery show.

With each sale, people came back to see my work more than once before making a purchase. I try to be at the gallery as often as I can to interact with visitors, but it's not possible to be there every day as I can during a weekend festival. My business cards have been very useful because they have photographs of my work so people can easily remember me when they're ready to discuss a piece.

I supplement my art career with commissions. I also offer workshops and lectures. I enjoy working with fiber artists who want to explore a little outside the box, try something new, or just have fun doing stuff with wire. I say yes to almost every event I can and participate fully by attending openings and handing out cards. Many times, commissions come my way because a client has seen something in my work that sparks an idea or interest. I use that as my starting point. Photos are helpful, but I like to visit the space if I can. Sometimes

see "Trisha Hassler" on page 41

A juror's journal: *Quilt National '11*

by Nelda Warkentin

The email from Kathleen Dawson, *Quilt National* Director, asking if I would consider being a juror for 2011, stood out from all my other emails. The inquiry came as a complete surprise, but I knew immediately that I would accept. Had I been asked a few years ago, I'm not sure I would have felt so confident. But after having participated in numerous critiques with a group of artists in Anchorage, Alaska, I not only felt up to the challenge, I wanted to jury an exhibition. Because it was *Quilt National* (QN), I knew I would be critiquing some of the best.

On September 16, Kathleen met the three jurors selected to judge *QN '11* at the airport in Columbus, Ohio. Eleanor McCain, an art quilter from Florida, arrived first, then me,

followed by Pauline Verbeek-Cowart, Chair of the Fiber Department at the Kansas City Art Institute. Eleanor and I knew each other, having met at workshops and conferences over the years. On the drive from Columbus to Athens, we shared information and got to know each other.

After settling in at our hotel, we spent the evening at Kathleen's home, along with her husband and several *QN* volunteers. After a gourmet dinner, everyone sat and watched in silence as 1,038 images flashed on a screen. Before starting, Kathleen had instructed the group, "No discussion or comments; just look." Seeing the quilts gave us a sense of the task before us.

As we were leaving Kathleen's house, we learned that a tornado had

hit Athens that evening. We were thankful to find our hotel still standing, but without power. The management gave us glow sticks so we could safely find our rooms.

In the morning we learned that the storm had leveled a building very near our hotel. The hotel staff was very quiet, thinking of people they knew who had suffered losses. Fortunately, the Dairy Barn Arts Center where the jurying was being held did not lose power. After a bite to eat, we jurors sat at a table looking at two monitors. On the large monitor, we would see the full-scale images of the entries; on the smaller one, we would see detail close-ups.

We received instructions from Kathleen again: "No talking about the quilts; no commenting at all."

SAQA members are well represented in *Quilt National 2011*.

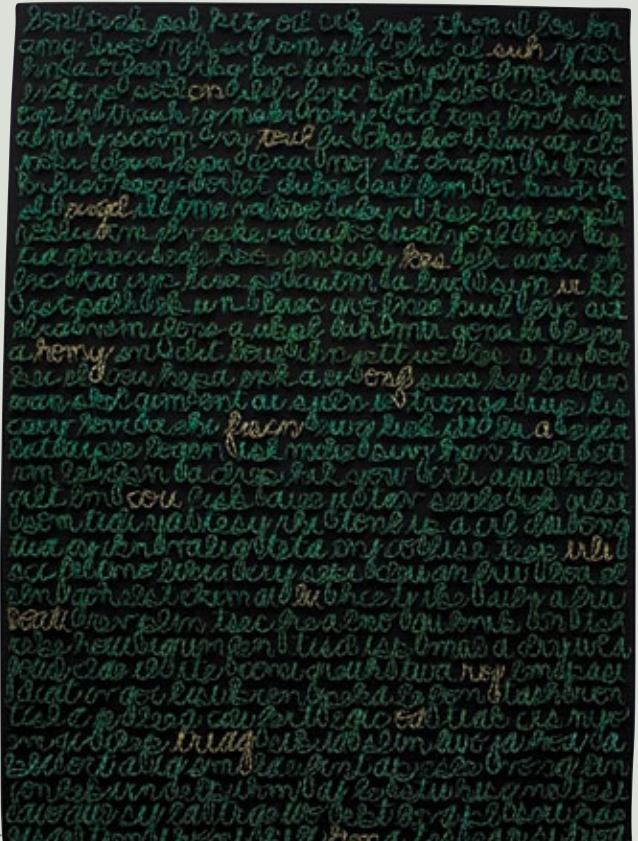
Shoko Hatano

Color Box #13 54 x 79 inches



Naomi Adams

Greek 72 x 53 inches



A volunteer reader was available to tell us about each quilt based on the information provided by each artist. Before starting, the jurors agreed that we only wanted to hear the number of the work (to make sure the quilt on the rating sheet and the image on the screen were the same) and the dimensions—no titles. I found it intriguing that the quilts were numbered and viewed in the order in which they'd been received. In other words, those quilts that were received first at the Dairy Barn were juried first.

After taking care of the preliminaries, each image was shown for ten seconds. The slide show was timed and ran automatically; there was no stopping. Without talking or commenting, we each assigned a numerical rating to each quilt using a scale

of 1 to 4. A rating of 1 meant "I don't want to see this quilt again," 2 signified "I might want to see this again," 3 meant "I want to look at this quilt again," and 4 signified "I probably want this quilt in the show." As an art quilter myself, I'm used to looking at work and making somewhat instant judgments. When I create my own quilts, I assess them throughout the process. In addition, I found that my previous participation in critique groups was invaluable. This combination of experience gave me the confidence to make assessments fairly quickly. The 10-second review was, with very few exceptions, ample time. Since we didn't speak during the review process, I can't comment on how the other jurors worked. But during the first round, I voted based on

my overall impression of each quilt.

After we completed each page of rankings, a volunteer took our forms and gave them to other volunteers who then entered our scores into a computer. When the scores were compiled, new ranking forms were created for the next round. Quilts with the highest scores moved on to the next viewing round; those with the lowest were no longer considered.

After completing the first review round and having lunch at the Dairy Barn, we repeated the evaluation process for the remaining quilts. Our ratings for the first round had reduced the number of entries under consideration to 667. For the second silent review, I focused only on composition. My thinking was, if the composition wasn't right, the work

Jayne Gaskins

Solitude 24 x 32 inches



Judy Martin

Cross My Heart 33 x 35 inches

shouldn't advance to the final round. After the second round, we had reduced the number to 380—good enough to call it a day.

We returned to our hotel rooms, freshened up a bit, and then went out to dinner with the *QN* staff and board members. It was another opportunity to enjoy and learn about each other. Our time at the restaurant was also a fun respite from a day of intense focus and study of the entries.

On Saturday morning, we three jurors walked from our hotel back to the Dairy Barn. Having been in a dark room reviewing entries for approximately eight hours the day before, we wanted to enjoy the fresh air while we could. We were careful to adhere to the rule of not talking about the entries, so we talked about other things like art theory, art quilts, and

weaving (Pauline's specialty).

Upon arriving at the Dairy Barn, we were again seated before two screens. That day, however, Kathleen advised us that we could discuss the quilts. We had 380 quilts to assess. To save time, we agreed that if a quilt had been ranked a 4 by each of us throughout the jury process, we didn't need to discuss it further; it would be part of the exhibition. As a result, fifty-three quilts were moved into this accepted category. These works would later be considered for an award.

We then looked at each remaining entry for as long as we wanted. We discussed the pros and cons of each work, focusing on composition, design considerations, and artistic intent. Composition and good design (including use of color and texture)

were very important. Also, every decision that went into the work had to be intentional and consistent with the overall concept. For example, an elegant image should have beautiful fabric and stitching. A folk-art quilt should have folk-style quilting. With regard to technique, we often asked, does the technique enhance the image or idea? For example, a digital image should take the viewer to some other place that wouldn't have happened if the image had simply been printed on paper or other fiber.

Consensus was important. We kept talking until all three of us were comfortable with our decision. As we discussed the works, I sometimes changed my mind (both pro and con) because the comments of the other jurors gave me new insights. The discussion was riveting, as it was an



Gay Lasher

Abstraction II 47 x 31 inches

Mary Beth Frezon

Solveig 46 x 69 inches



opportunity to tell each other why we thought a particular work should or should not be in the exhibition.

Once we had decided which quilts would be in the exhibition, we focused on giving awards. We started by considering those works that had been set aside at the start of the day, those that had consistently received a ranking of 4 by all three of us. Clearly, those were the quilts we all agreed scored highest. Using the list of awards and the criteria for each (for example, the Quilts Japan award can only go to a teacher and the Persistence Pays award can only go to someone who hasn't had work in a previous Quilt National) and looking at thumbnail images so we could see the array of quilts, we discussed possible selections. Again, reaching consensus was important.

When we were done, the names of the accepted artists were read for the first time and we viewed the virtual exhibition in its entirety. I was surprised to hear some of the artists' names. Knowing that we had selected work by individuals I know, but whose work I hadn't recognized, was fun.

This last day of jurying was long. We were rewarded with lively discussion and a scrumptious dinner at a Dairy Barn board member's home. The dinner was indicative of the significant amount of volunteerism that went into the jurying process. Entry fees and other monetary donations make the exhibition possible, but *QN* happens because many individuals contribute their time.

All in all, the experience was very

rewarding. I got to spend time with interesting people and view incredible quilts. Two days of doing critiques was exhausting both mentally and verbally, but it was also exhilarating. My thinking was challenged again when I later wrote my juror's statement. All the work was made worthwhile because of the personal rewards and the thrill of compiling an exceptional exhibition. It was an experience I won't soon forget. ▼

*A previous **Quilt National** exhibitor herself, Nelda Warkentin worked as one of three jurors for **Quilt National '11**, scheduled to be held at the Dairy Barn Arts Center in Athens, Ohio, May 27 through September 5, 2011. Warkentin serves as treasurer on SAQA's board of directors. See her work at www.neldawarkentin.com.*

Kim Shearrow

Sunrise at Age 45 105 x 104 inches



Pat Budge

Compatibility 46 x 60 inches



The Red-thread moment

The power of personal symbols in your art

by Carolyn Ryan

Maybe a sidewalk crack is just a 12-inch gap in the cement, or maybe it has the potential to move you in a way that uniquely inspires your art and, through you, your audience.

Is your creative spirit open to your environment? When you go for a walk, does a forked crack on the sidewalk mean the section needs repairing or does it speak to you of a terrifying lightning storm, the beauty of a jagged pattern when ice cracks, a repressed sadness, or unbridgeable gaps in a relationship?

If you stay in a moment of recognition and allow feelings to surface, they will empower your imagination. These are the moments that can expand and clarify your artistic voice if you are open to them. Be prepared for a little discomfort and a strong desire to look away, but give these moments your full attention. Connecting with personal symbols and using them in your work requires vulnerability and practice.

The proof of the power of these creative triggers is in the moment when you are drawn to a work not only by the maker's technique and composition, but also by her energy. You stand still; you gaze—you look

again. You are connected to the artist through the image or moment that inspired the piece.

Personal symbols are waking fantasies

The Swiss psychologist Carl Jung focused on personal symbols in dream states and the powerful connection between waking fantasies and the unconscious, where memories and emotions are stored. In his final book, *Man and His Symbols*, published in 1964, he differentiated between signs and personal symbols. A sign is an image which is collectively known; a personal sign, or symbol, is private and connects you to your unique internal reality. For instance, we all feel troubled by a skull and crossbones, but to most people, cracked cement is devoid of emotional content. If that crack speaks to you, it belongs to you and asks to be used.

Here's an example: In line at the grocery checkout I usually observe and try to ignore the distractions, but

today something grabs me: a bright red thread traveling up the gray pencil skirt of the woman ahead of me in line. Its color glows as it moves across her waistband onto the white of her sheer blouse. It heads toward her hair, turns left, and meanders across the white textured field before disappearing under her arm. The grocery store din recedes. I wonder where the thread will end up. Where will I end up? I think of a glowing fault line, an earthquake raining rocks, chaos. I feel the fury of red, and its sparking passion. As the thread's creative potential expands, I recognize its symbolic power for me. The thread moves on the woman's back as she unloads her groceries, up and across, up and across. It becomes a biomorphic beaked head with long waving appendages.

I feel the red thread and hold onto its impact. I know that it will appear in my work, either by design or unbidden, because the image is now personal to me. It has

meaning and triggers feelings. It stays with me as I head for my car. Trivial triggers can become highly personal symbols, pathways into yourself and emerging in your artistic work.

I sometimes try to describe a red-thread moment to a friend, but it is never as powerful as when it is articulated through art. That is the nature of personal symbols. They work in the heart and mind to connect the artist with the viewer. Since no one's personal symbols are the same, I wonder in real time whether the person standing to the right of me in the checkout line wants to reach out and remove that pesky red thread, thus kindly tidying a stranger and restoring a sense of order in her own universe.

We all have a rich internal world, but feeling and accessing our personal symbols requires practice and a willingness to experience uncertainty, fear, passion, and exuberance. How does a red thread grab you? How do you observe and internalize a beautiful sidewalk crack? How do we harness the wealth of our unique inner material so we can infuse a nicely done piece with tangible intent?

Create and use your personal symbols: observe, imagine, remember, work

Observe. Stop and feel. It's much easier to ignore your interior voice and walk on, than to stop and recognize the trigger for what it is. Be curious about what you feel and others will be drawn to it in your art.

Imagine. Allow enough time to let an image expand. It's not just a crack; it's a map of your broken heart. The

point where the crack ends is the coming of peace. Experience it in more than one way. Feel the contradictions. As you allow time to listen to yourself, you give artistic life to surprising patterns of imagery in all their complexity.

You can also capture symbols using your digital camera. I recently saw the outlines of a door within a door within a door on an old cement wall. The lines were barely visible, but the image made me uneasy. I didn't want to explore further because it was Thanksgiving Day—no moodiness allowed. I compromised and took two quick shots. I didn't look at the images for over a week, but when I did, the door was still there and so was the feeling. I understood that this image spoke in my voice and deserved my respect. It became imprinted and will appear in my work. If successful, my use of color, line, and form will convey the initial feeling.

Remember. Take a few extra minutes to firm up what you are experiencing. My red thread seemed to be in motion. I could see it meandering and glowing. The more I felt it, the more personal it became, and it has appeared in my art because it remains as potent in my memory as when I actually saw it. Find solitude in the midst of chaos to relive and remember. Intense moments can be lost if we're too self-conscious to be still and feel enough to imprint.

Work. You're bored, and you need a fresh idea for a new piece. Get quiet; get still. Feel your own inner space and see what personal symbol

appears. Stare at a piece of white fabric on your desk. Let your mind wander over your past few days. If it's uncomfortable, know that distractions will recede. When did you last have a moment of great peace or great turmoil? What is your symbol for that moment? The unconscious uses these symbols to connect with your internal realities. The work is in bringing these feelings and sensations to life in your artwork.

Look again – your next piece might be in front of you

You avert your eyes from a couple's embrace, a single shivering leaf twirling, a squashed cantaloupe in the street, spilled pepper on a restaurant

see "Red thread" on page 42



In # 1 of my series *When Blood Runs High* (30 x 15 inches), the red thread traveling across a woman's blouse in the grocery store becomes a biomorphic beaked head with long waving appendages.

Showcasing art from the past and present

An interview with Elizabeth V. Warren, guest curator of *Quilts: Masterworks*

by Vivien Zepf

Elizabeth V. Warren has the honor of being guest curator for two major quilt exhibitions in New York City this year. The first is the two-part *Quilts: Masterworks from the American Folk Art Museum* exhibition at the American Folk Art Museum (AFAM) and the second, *Infinite Variety: Three Centuries of Red and White Quilts*, was exhibited at The Armory. In February she graciously shared her thoughts with the *SAQA Journal*. We began our conversation by discussing how Warren came to be the guest curator for both of these exhibitions.

Warren has been associated with AFAM since 1984, when, as a graduate student, she curated her first exhibition on Amish quilts. She then became a full-time curator working until 1991. Since then, she has been a consulting and guest curator and is now on the Board of Trustees, still

doing lectures, books, and exhibitions. In 1996, she published *Glorious American Quilts* with Sharon Eisenstat, which is a review of the Museum's quilt collection. "I probably know the 500-piece collection as well as anyone." A few years ago, Rizzoli, a publishing house, came to AFAM with the idea of creating a new version of the quilt collection catalog featuring 200 quilts in full color, with each piece getting a full page. The museum invited Warren to write the book, and the two-part exhibition grew out of her work on the book.

The *Red and White Quilts* show came about because Warren has known the owner of the quilts, Joanna Rose, through the alumni association of their college. "I've borrowed objects from her collection for exhibition, as have others at the Museum." A couple of years ago

Warren invited Rose to participate in a seminar AFAM had on quilts and textiles. Rose recalled how when she started collecting many years ago, quilts were commonly used to wrap up or move other objects. They weren't collected, considered works of art, or studied as pieces of history as they are now. She was impressed by the amount of research and scholarship that had been going on in the quilt world. "In January 2010, she called us and said that for her 80th birthday she wanted to give a gift to the city of New York and put all of her 650 red and white quilts on display, and she wanted AFAM to handle it. Given her strong feelings towards the City (her family is very philanthropic and involved in several New York City charities), the exhibition would be open to the public for free."

"What's really amazing is that

Infinite Variety: Three Centuries of Red and White Quilts at the Park Avenue Armory



Photo by Gavin Ashworth



Kaleidoscopic XVI: More Is More 64 x 64 inches ©1996 Paula Nadelstern
 Gift of the artist, 2008.21.1

Photo by Karen Bell, New York



Photograph by Gavin Ashworth, New York

Reflection
 78 x 48 inches ©2001 Kathyanne White
 Gift of the artist, 2003.11.1

All quilts from the collection of the American Folk Art Museum, New York, New York.

no two quilts in her red and white collection are alike. Ms. Rose has an incredible memory. She knew in her head what pieces she did or didn't have and would purchase quilts on the basis of that. She never made a mistake."

Warren explained the selection process for the two-part *Museum* exhibition. Each exhibit will display 35 pieces that relate to one another in terms of historical perspective; both progress from the earliest quilts in the collection to the most contemporary. Each of eleven categories in the history of American quilt making is represented. "I tried to create two equal weight exhibitions so all the blockbusters weren't shown first. I asked, what piece do we perhaps have new information on or which hasn't been seen in a long time? What do

I think deserves to be shown? These kinds of questions go into making the final decision."

When asked why she chose two particular contemporary pieces for the exhibit, Warren said, "Basically it came down to, what did I like? Paula Nadelstern had a one-woman show at the Museum a few years ago, so I'm familiar with her work and I just love it. As for Kathyanne White's quilt, I kept looking at it in comparison to the crazy quilt. I have no idea if this was in her head when she made it or not—probably not—but I see it as a very contemporary version of the crazy quilt, especially as I look at how all the different pieces are put together. Also, White had hand dyed many of the different blues in her quilt and there's one color of blue that comes really close to a Van Gogh

blue-green that I just adore."

Warren's role as curator of the *Red and White* Armory exhibition focused on the placement of the quilts. It was a process of providing the best view for each individual piece. Some of the quilts were placed on platforms for a close up presentation, and some were hung for a better vantage point. Warren also wrote the history statement in the exhibition and brochure. She shared an interesting story about a pair of quilts in the collection that were purchased separately but were clearly made by the same woman. There are words all over each and one includes this woman's name, some dates, and a place as well. "Through that information, I was able to figure out who the people named on the quilt were. It was an amazing

continued on next page

Freedom Quilt

©1983 Jessie B. Telfair (1913-1986)
74 x 68 inches

Gift of Judith Alexander in loving memory of her sister,
Rebecca Alexander, 2004.9.1

genealogical tour of this woman's family; she just came to life. This was a high point for me in getting the exhibition ready. I like doing this kind of research. Hopefully there will be a book about this collection someday."

Besides choosing which quilts would be in the new Museum book, Warren also wrote the text for each of the eleven sections of the book. In *Glorious American Quilts*, she focused far more on historical background information; however, Rizzoli has planned this new publication as an art book. This raised the question of whether or not the studio quilt is gaining recognition as an art form in the broader art community. "That's the way Rizzoli is positioning the book and marketing it. They're not going the traditional route through quilt stores and quilters. They've been selling it with their other art books."

Warren discussed her view of today's art quilters, the integration of technology in the creation of studio quilts, and how she sees the artwork of today from a historical perspective. She studies these objects as works of art whether they were made in 1800 or 2010. "I happen to believe that the quilts we have in the Museum that we collect and study really weren't made for function; they were made as works of art. And I happen to think that we have them because they weren't subjected to the washtub or to people sleeping with them. Nobody would put that kind of work into something that was going to be used up right away. For example, some of the quilts made



Photograph by Gavin Ashworth, New York

in the early 19th century have such elaborate stitching and such exquisite and expensive materials; they were obviously made just to look at. These women were making art in a manner that was acceptable, that fit into their home, and that's why quilt styles change over the years. They were not made in a vacuum." Warren believes that the Victorian show quilts were made as a means of expression that is artistic, sociological, and at times even political. It was the same then as now. "I'm saying this as someone who doesn't make quilts, but as someone who looks at people who do and tries to understand why they do what they do and what makes it look the way it does."

"For example, when the sewing machine came in, it was the greatest invention that's ever happened for women. It freed them from the tedium of their everyday sewing and gave them more time to devote to

their artistic sewing. So why should anyone feel differently about times when contemporary technology comes into play in today's quilt art? It's still making use of what's out there. If you're an artist, I think you use what technology is available and best suits your needs. And you certainly don't ignore it because you're adhering to something that was done in the past. Today's art quilts should be included in what we do because to me, it's a continuation of a tradition and that's one of the definitions of folk art. It's a continuing tradition that's handed down, but it's going to change with each generation."

This led us to a discussion of pieces in the Museum exhibition that are not only examples of great art but also pieces in which the maker used the quilt to express a particular point of view or were avant-garde. We focused on two such pieces on display in part one of the Museum's

exhibition: *The Freedom Quilt* and an Amish fan quilt.

Warren believes that *The Freedom Quilt* by Jessie B. Telfair (1913–1986) is a clear political statement. “She was protesting because she was fired when she went to register to vote in the 1960s. She was frustrated and angry, and this is how she expressed it.”

There is an Amish fan quilt in the show that she considers to be avant-garde work in light of its culture. This fan pattern was popular in mainstream culture at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. “For an Amish woman to take up a design that was popular in the outside world was very avant-garde and bold of her. Similarly, to see some of the Amish quilts stitched with flowers

and vines was equally bold—they couldn’t do representational figures on their quilts; that’s why there’s no appliqué. But they could stitch that into their quilts because those stitches were necessary. Perhaps that’s not avant-garde, but I certainly consider it daring.”

Warren summed it up perfectly by saying, “I think it’s really wonderful that the Museum is doing *The Year of the Quilt*; that’s what we’ve named the efforts and activities involved with all three exhibits. If we can get more people interested in quilting and not just looking at it as dead bed coverings but as a lively art form, then that would be great.”

Part I of the *Quilts: Masterworks from the American Folk Art Museum*

exhibition at the AFAM was on display until mid-May. The second half of the exhibition, showcasing a different group of 35 quilts, is showing from May 10 through October 16, 2011. The exhibition *Infinite Variety: Three Centuries of Red and White Quilts* was at the Armory in New York City in March. For more information on these exhibits, go to www.folkartmuseum.org/masterworkquilts. A free app for the *Red and White* exhibition, including images of all 650 quilts, is available for iPhone, iPod touch, iPad, or Android smart phone. Visit folkartmuseum.org/infinitevariety. ▼

SAQA active member Vivien Zepf lives in Thornwood, New York. Her blog is www.sevenpinesdesigns.blogspot.com and her website is www.VivienZepf.com.



Photograph by Gavin Ashworth, New York

Diamond in the Square Quilt

(Artist unidentified)
Lancaster County, Pennsylvania
1910-1925
78 x 78 inches

Gift of Freyda Rothstein, 1998.8.2

How long does it take?

Acceptance of any new medium takes time

by Doria Goocher

How much time is required before an art form is universally accepted as fine art? A lot.

For ages, paintings were not considered fine art, but simply handcrafted items. In the 1300s, the definition of “fine art” was confined to poets and authors of written literature. During the Renaissance (roughly the 14th–17th centuries), painters gained status and were slowly recognized as true artists. Particularly in Italy, artists gained recognition largely due to commissions awarded by the Roman Catholic Church to artists for religious paintings and patron portraits. Painting then took center stage as a fine art expression when previously it had been secondary to the art of drawing. Many historians believe that Velazquez’s painting *Las Meninas*, created in 1656, marked a turning point in the perception of painting as fine art. By hinting at what might be seen and creating levels of illusion and reality, Velazquez created a complexity in art not seen before, showing that paint could be a tool to render an artistic vision.

Photography is the most recent art form to gain universal fine art status. In the 1800s it was considered vulgar and pretentious to frame a photograph for a gallery exhibition. Credit goes to Alfred Stieglitz in 1905 and 291, his gallery in New York. Stieglitz wanted to exhibit photography in the context of other mediums, such as painting and sculpture, and showcased his photographs side-by-side with art by Cezanne, Picasso, Duchamp, and later O’Keeffe. Despite these efforts, and those of other

photographers such as Ansel Adams in the 1930s in San Francisco, photography was considered a technical craft and the stepchild of the arts. It took 50 more years before photography was finally accepted as fine art. By the 1950s, photographers were able to use new photographic technology to push the boundaries of the medium and their tools, altering and interpreting photos and producing exciting effects that displayed their vision.

Textiles have a much longer history than painting or photography, with the earliest surviving examples dating back to the 6th century during the Byzantine period. Carefully preserved tapestries, weavings, and banners from the English Gothic, Romanesque, and Islamic Spain periods are revered today as fine art. Though the last three centuries are rife with examples of exquisite quilts and textiles, quilts didn’t regain global notice as fine art until 1971 when the Whitney Museum in New York ran the exhibit *Abstract Design in American Quilts*. This exhibit was the first of its kind, positing that the designs of quilts were akin to, and as valuable as, highly regarded abstract paintings. For the most part, the critics agreed. Eighteen years later, in 1989, Yvonne Porcella founded Studio Art Quilt Associates. Since its inception, SAQA has been the leading organization promoting the quilt as art and educating the world about the art quilt as a viable form of fine art expression. Art quilts are beginning to be accepted, although not universally, as an “emerging” art form.

Fortunately, the art quilt did not have to wait three or four centuries to gain recognition. Today, information spreads quickly due to our burgeoning communication technology. An explosion of interest in the art quilt has energized quilters who are encouraged to create original designs based on experience, imagery, and ideas rather than traditional quilt patterns. Since the initial Whitney exhibit, quilt artists have gained prestige, and today many museums and galleries exhibit art quilts. It remains true, however, that while the word “quilt” is commonly recognized, the term “art quilt” or “art cloth” is not, and it certainly is not yet universally equated with “fine art.”

Still, the genre is well on its way to gaining fine art status. The exhibition *Art Cloth: Engaging New Visions*, which traveled throughout Australia and hung at the Fairfield City Museum in Sydney, Australia, at the end of 2010, showcased work from international artists and proves this point. Included in this show were various whole cloth creations, including Jane Dunnewold’s *Sacred Planet 1: The Myth of Human Superiority*. In the catalog essay for the exhibition, curator Marie-Therese Wisniowski observes an “... metamorphosis underway in which contemporary fabrics are now being cast as ‘fine art’ cloths.” Reviewer Jessica Hemmings, in the Fall 2010 issue of the *Surface Design Journal* said the exhibit shows that “textiles provide a rich medium for sophisticated communication of conceptual ideas.”

How can we as artists secure the



Sacred Planet 1: The Myth of Human Superiority
108 x 44 inches
©2009 Jane Dunnewold

future of the art quilt and ensure its rightful place in the fine art arena? Artists should explore juried fine art exhibitions that include painting, sculpture, and other mediums. Art quilters need to join non-quilt art groups and be informed of other venues to display their work. Researching local museums may uncover regional shows for artists. Art galleries at local colleges and at state universities are worth exploring. Joining museum guilds, art institutes, and university art programs and participating in art seminars will allow the art quilter to be part of the total art community, thereby enabling the art quilt to gain additional recognition and acceptance through exposure.

Innumerable juried quilt shows now exist and present multiple opportunities for exhibition. These shows have become increasingly competitive and have raised the bar of the art form. An oft-overlooked display opportunity for art quilters lies within the fine art division of state and city fairs. Unlike jam and flower competitions at these venues, the fine art section is a juried event. With the local press and art

critics turning out for these events, the exposure is huge in terms of personal recognition as well as serving as a vehicle for public recognition of the art quilt.

Aside from the numerous quilt publications on the market, consider scientific and other professional and technical magazines and journals that could be looking for cover art. For example, Ann Harwell's beautiful and enticing kaleidoscope quilt *Balance the Scales of World Justice* was featured on the cover of the December 2010 issue of *American Psychologist*. The co-editor of this journal wrote, "It can be argued that a quilt is an expression of creative vision equal to an oil painting or watercolor." In time, the status of an art quilt as equal to a painting will not have to be argued as images of art quilts that express in-depth vision and an artist's point of view become more appealing to all readers.

So let's end the controversy of what we should call an art quilt, or if the word "quilt" limits us as artists. We can speed the time for recognition of the art quilt as fine art by working outside of the quilt arena. Let's drop the nomenclature and enter non-quilt shows, fine art exhibitions, and fair expositions. Let's explore publication possibilities with professional journals. Let's overcome the myopic vision that makes us focus on a niche devoted only to art quilts. Let's rub elbows with the established fine art community and network within that sphere. In these ways, we'll find new opportunities to promote the art quilt. It does take time, but we're rapidly approaching the universal acceptance of the art quilt as a distinct expression of fine art. ▼

SAQA active member Doria Goocher creates art quilts and art books. She lives in San Diego, California, and her website is www.designsbydoria.com.



Ann Harwell's *Balance the Scales of World Justice* (57 x 57 inches, ©1998) appeared on the cover of the December 2010 issue of *American Psychologist*.

SAQA member gallery: *Blue*

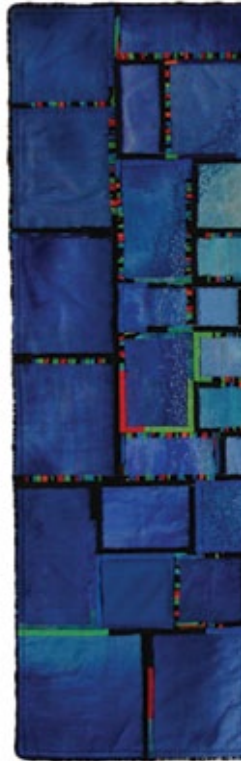


Alison Muir

Water

13 x 38 inches ©2007

Water was made as an experiment to see if I could make a piece of “imagetext” as defined by W. J. Thomas Mitchell in his book *Picture Theory*. A piece of imagetext is a composite concept work that combines image and text, relating to the visual and verbal, and is further defined as illusionism and realism.



Lorna Morck

**Boxed In 5: Exploring
Inside Out**

30 x 30 inches ©2006

Literally inside out, the back side of the top became the public face. It mirrors a personal step towards internal healing.



Grietje van der Veen

Diving for Pearls

110 x 53 cm ©2009

Who does not dream of diving in deep water and finding pearls without end?





Nancy G. Cook

Ligustrum Twilight

36 x 25 inches ©2009

www.nancygcook.com

Ligustrum has a wonderful lustrous cluster of dark blue berries that are highly decorative on large shrubs. Generally known as privet, it is found in many old, modest-income neighborhoods.



Deborah Weir

Closer Than You Think

22 x 22 inches ©2010

www.deborahweir.net

I have been fascinated by the modular work of American painter Chuck Close. In this piece I made individual squares, each of which is resolved in a slightly different way than its neighbors, to create a whole in which those units disappear visually in service to the overall composition.

Lisa Call

Markings #7

64 x 72 inches ©2007

lisacall.com

The *Markings* series translates the beauty and quality of simple hand drawn lines into textiles. The series evokes the comfort humans derive from repetition and also raises the question of how we handle the unexpected within a pattern.



Derivative art

Beyond the legal definition, a practical definition for artists

by Leni Levenson Wiener

Imagine a time 50,000 years ago. A man dips his hand in pigment and stamps it on a cave wall. Another man looks on and remarks, “Hey, that looks pretty good. I can do that.” And he does. Thus is created the first derivative artwork in human history. Its creator is probably not worried about copyright, finding his own voice, or being accused of producing derivative work. He will never need to argue that, since he is missing a finger, the pigment is a different color, or that his hand is printed upside down, the resulting hand stamp is different from the original.

Move forward in the history of man and art, to a time when popular artists were commissioned to do portraits and religious paintings. It was not uncommon to be working in the school of, the style of, a well known painter. Derivative? Yes. Problematic? Not yet.

Fast forward to today where the issue of derivative art is one of copyright which branches into two distinct directions: ownership and financial gain. The U.S. Copyright Office defines derivative art as “any art that is based on the work of another artist or school of art, or uses all or part of another artist’s work in it.” Their focus is to prevent profiting from images, writing, or music created by someone else. Under this definition, Shepard Fairey was sued by the Associated Press for using a photograph taken by Mannie Garcia for his now famous Obama poster. The lawsuit was to determine who could profit from the image. Most of us will never have such a high-profile problem.

So what, then, does derivative mean to us as working artists? The practical definition has nothing to do with copyright law or financial compensation; it is about artistic integrity. Derivative art, for us, simply means an artist is working in the voice of another artist. Whenever an artwork of any type can be mistaken for the work of another (usually better known) artist, then that work runs the risk of being labeled derivative.

For our practical, working artist’s definition, copyright isn’t even relevant. Certain artworks are no longer even protected by copyright laws, but creating a piece that looks reminiscent of the Mona Lisa, for example, is still derivative. And creating a piece that resembles the work of another art quilter, the copyright of which may or may not be officially registered, does not remove from it the derivative stigma.

There is a famous quote by Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart, which (paraphrased) says “I can’t define hard-core pornography, but I know it when I see it.” For many artists, the definition of derivative art is just as elusive. If you have ever entered a gallery, a museum, or a quilt show and thought you recognized an artist’s work, only to see on the accompanying card that the work was in fact done by someone else, then you knew it too. It was derivative.

So what constitutes derivative art? Producing derivative work does not mean broad strokes like realism or abstraction, piecing or raw edge machine appliqué. It means utilizing

a specific technique, a color palette, a way of presenting an idea, or even a part of another person’s work that is easily identifiable as belonging to that other person. Derivative artwork is built on a foundation created by another artist.

I have a favorite brownie recipe from one of my cookbooks. The author of the book obviously spent a long time working out the ingredients and their proportions, the mixing instructions, the baking time, and temperature. It was my idea to add a teaspoon of almond extract and leave out the nuts whenever I make these brownies. Although my brownies taste different, they rely on the foundation of the original recipe. They are derivative brownies. Artwork is no different (although less tasty).

Taking the brownie analogy into the art world, think about an artist whose work is rarely confused with anyone else’s: Jackson Pollock. At the very mention of his name, most people can immediately conjure up a mental picture of his work. Now imagine a painting hanging in a gallery that is almost like the Jackson Pollock in your head, except for a few small changes, and signed by someone else. This unknown artist is using Pollock’s distinctive voice and technique—and whatever his intention—is creating work that is derivative of Jackson Pollock.

Often derivative art begins in a workshop, where students can be highly influenced by the work of the instructor. Taking a workshop to learn how another artist approaches technical obstacles does not entitle



Girl With a Pearl Earring

from a painting by Vermeer

12 x 12 inches ©2007

Leni says, "This piece was made to illustrate a face in my book *Photo-Inspired Art Quilts*. However, even though *Girl with the Pearl Earring* by Vermeer is no longer copyright protected, using her face is still derivative."

attendees to call that technique their own. There is nothing wrong with making workshop pieces as developmental exercises or for personal enjoyment. (Some art quilters will never move beyond this point and happily produce workshop-influenced pieces solely for themselves.) But these derivative works should never be entered into juried shows or exhibited, and should never be added to a serious art portfolio. They simply are not original works of art.

The foundation for derivative art can also be a pattern; in essence, someone's brownie recipe. It does not matter what fabrics you put together or what other changes you make. If you begin with a pattern that is not of your own design, the result is derivative.

There are those who argue that all art is derivative, that there is nothing

new to say. If this is the case, then the only true artist is that fellow who first stamped his hand on the cave wall. Art is not static; it is constantly evolving. As art quilters (and relative newcomers to the art world), we should understand better than anyone that there is constant experimentation, innovation, and "thinking outside the box" by art pioneers who create new, as yet unseen forms of artistic expression.

So does that mean all work must be cutting edge, must reinvent the genre and break new ground to be considered original? Very few of us will blaze a trail of this kind in our careers, but that alone does not make our work derivative of those who do. We can be inspired by other artists, by nature, books, music, even workshops that set a spark to start us on an artistic journey. But the journey

and the final destination must be the uniquely personal interpretation of each individual artist. It must encompass not just the personality and feelings, but the entire life experience of that artist. Creating an art quilt of a tree is not derivative of every other artwork of a tree in human history if the artist looks within rather than outward to express that tree in his or her own voice.

Finding one's voice is perhaps the hardest part of becoming an artist. It's no accident that we refer to the unique and individual artistic expression as a voice. When you speak to someone you know on the phone, you immediately recognize the sound of their voice. In the same way, art should be instantly identifiable by the look of one's voice. When your work hangs in an exhibition and a stranger stands in front of it and declares "that looks like a [fill in your name here]" you will know you've found your voice.

When it comes to art, imitation is not the highest form of flattery. Imitating or emulating another artist is grasping for one's identity by taking on that of another and in the end is no different than outright copying. If you have to defend your work as original, it's probably derivative. ▼

SAQA professional artist member Leni Levenson Wiener is a fiber artist and book author. She lives in New Rochelle, New York. Her website is www.leniwiener.com.

Transformation: Creating contemporary “green” art from vintage clothing

by Libby Mijanovich

Transformation is defined as a renewal or radical change—an apropos description of both my life and artwork. Upon seeing our art, people are often surprised when they learn that my husband, Jim, and I used to be scientists and have no formal art training. Transformation is the key ingredient in our art, because we work exclusively with recycled vintage clothing, combining countless fragments of materials into intricate, involved textile wall pieces.

First, our background story. In early 1999, Jim and I took a leap of faith. Leaving behind our careers as health care provider and computer scientist, we stepped into the world of professional craft art. By following our hearts and the guidance of mentors, we found ourselves wandering the aisles of one of the biggest wholesale craft shows in the country with over 1,000 exhibitors.

It was here that I stumbled upon a woman who was using recycled wool sweaters to create blankets, pillows, rugs, and dolls. Since environmental consciousness is at the core of our personal philosophy, I was hooked on this concept. I knew that I had found our starting point: recycling clothing.

Thus began my foray into the world of quilting. I had sewn all my life but had no quilting experience or exposure to it. Knowing that we would be limited by the amount of each fabric available for use, I began researching in earnest, reading everything I could get my hands on about the process of quilting, about various construction techniques, and about design possibilities.

When it comes to fabric, our motto is “More is Better.” We have collected thousands of articles of used clothing over the years. Our collection is predominantly comprised of button-down shirts, but we also acquire dresses, pants, and skirts. There is a veritable wealth of material to be reclaimed, and even without dyeing or surface painting, our stash covers the entire spectrum of color, value, and texture.

Every article of clothing is washed and then cut apart to remove all seams, collars, cuffs, hems, plackets, waistbands, and darts. All fabric must be prepped; cotton is starched and fusible interfacing is ironed onto silk and rayon. Then the fabric becomes part of our main stash, sorted by color, which fills an entire 20-foot wall of our studio.

Once we decide the general direction or idea for a color scheme, the first crucial step in our process begins. We carefully select a group of materials with textures, patterns, and colors that blend and complement each other. In order to get the span of value we strive for in our work, we aim to combine 18 fabrics, ranging from very light to very dark. Knowing that we will often run out of fabrics during the process, we choose backup materials as well. Consequently, it’s not unusual for us to use up to 30 different articles of clothing in any particular color scheme. Taking the time to allow the combination of fabrics to unfold is critical because once the decision is made, we’re committed to these materials and there’s no going back.

Thousands of small pieces are then individually cut and sewn to create hundreds of blocks with varying degrees of value. Each set of materials has its own personality, and the interplay of those fabrics, how they “talk” to one another, develops as we go through the multiple steps of constructing the blocks.

Final designs are determined and tweaked and each piece is intricately stitched using vibrant metallic threads to accentuate and complement the overall design. The combination of value and the use of small pieces, along with elaborate stitching, culminate in art that’s alive with depth, motion, and the illusion of radiant light.

Viewers often ask us, “What are the inspirations for your designs?” “Do you figure it all out before starting?” “Do you use a computer program?”

Ideas for designs come from many sources. Commissions always foster an environment to stretch our creative envelope, and numerous new designs have developed in the process of working directly with clients. Some designs evolve from previous work. For example, we have taken the simple concept of a diagonal line and expanded it into diptychs, triptychs, and pieces as complex as nine panels. At the moment, we’re developing new designs that focus on circular forms.

Collaboration stimulates ideas for new designs as well. Jim and I spend lots of time in conversation and banter. “Ooooooh, what about this?” “Do you think we can do that?” For us, design comes down to lots of experimentation and time in the studio.



Encounter
30 x 73x 1.5 inches
©2010 Mija

I'm talking about years of time here. And, when all else fails, there's always the shower. I can't tell you how many times ideas and solutions have come to me while taking a shower.

As full-time professional artists, we continually strive to push our creative limits to discover and create new bodies of work. This involves not only the consideration of design, but scale and presentation. It requires a critical review of where we are, what direction we would like to go, and where we see our work in the marketplace. We also must consider the logistics involved—how to present the work along with how to transport and care for it.

Recently we felt the need to take our work to a new level. We shifted our art from single-panel pieces to multi-panel artwork stretched and mounted on frames. This new presentation has changed the work dramatically, conveying a clean, finished look. We have also discovered a wealth of entirely new design possibilities as the panels can be displayed horizontally, vertically, or on point, in any orientation, allowing for numerous display options.

Moving in a new direction requires taking things one step at a time, seeing what works and what doesn't,

and trusting in the process of discovery and intuition. The desire to create the best art we can, as well as keeping our market niche in mind, is a delicate balancing act that all professional artists must master.

Many people are surprised that it's possible for spouses to collaborate and to enjoy working together. They often ask how we divide our work load. Jim is the "forager gatherer," procuring all of our raw material from the local Goodwill stores here in Asheville, North Carolina. He's got an uncanny knack for being able to go through an entire store and pick out everything worthwhile. He also does all the cutting—literally thousands of pieces of fabric, individually cut for each color scheme. And most important of all, Jim is the cook! That leaves me to do the sewing, ironing, and all the business and marketing tasks.

As to the creative aspect, we do lots of brainstorming together regarding new design ideas and color palettes we want to focus on. We're both active idea generators. My job is to figure out how to implement those ideas or to nix them. We make all final decisions on fabric choices and designs together. No fabrics are cut

and no blocks sewn into the final outcome until we both agree to move forward. We have found that two sets of eyes are better than one, as we each have our own perspective.

Do we agree 100% of the time? Of course not, but the creative process takes on a life of its own as we open up to the willingness to consider each other's viewpoint. We are open to new directions and possibilities. We try not to take ourselves too seriously, and consequently, we smile and laugh a lot.

Over the past decade, the artwork we have created at our business, Mija, has evolved as we have matured as artists. We began with art quilts, but our work has expanded into multi-panel framed and mounted fine decorative fiber art pieces. We have continued to evolve as individuals, stretching the envelope of our creativity, as well as the perception of fiber art as an art form. ▼

Libby Mijanovich and her husband Jim live in western North Carolina and are members of numerous national and international juried organizations. Their work can be found in select galleries and several private and corporate collections worldwide, as well as in juried exhibitions. View their art and their retail show schedule on their website: www.mijafiberart.com.

Preparing your mind and body for creating

by Judy Warner

We are at our best when our minds and bodies are in sync, enabling positive energy to flow freely between thought and action. I have spent much of the past 25 years working with my friend and colleague, Mr. Thomas Crum, teaching how to achieve physical and mental synchronicity to every imaginable group of people, from CEOs to school cafeteria workers. The principles we teach can be used at work, at home, in sports, and in the arts.

We all have many rituals in our lives, whether we realize it or not. While some of these may be linked to our unique culture and traditions, many of our rituals are subtle daily practices we have created, consciously and unconsciously, over the years. And, while some may be helpful, others are not.

What we do when we set out to sew or design a quilt sets the stage for the quality of our quilting experience. It all relates to our rituals. You probably already have a few routines you do as you sit down at your machine—check the bobbin, clean the bobbin compartment, adjust lighting, maybe put on some music and, if you have a studio, shut the door on the rest of the world. In addition to all these practical steps before sewing, there are a few ideas from the mind/body arts that you can easily add to your preparations that will enhance your quilting experience.

Physical preparations

On the physical side, get your body ready to sew. Take a moment to stretch—particularly your upper

body. A simple movement like raising your hands to face level and then opening your arms out to the sides and bringing your hands back together again will help to release tension in your shoulders, neck, and upper back. In fact, you should not only stretch before you sit down to quilt or sew, but often while you are seated. Your neck, shoulder, and back are the most vulnerable parts of your frame while you are sewing. Quilters tend to hunch over to see what they are doing while quilting, and this can quickly lead to muscle fatigue and pain. Pausing to stretch along the way can allow you to sew pain-free for much longer.

After you do some stretching, the next thing you want to check is your posture as you get seated. It is important to be relaxed while sewing, but a relaxed posture at the machine is not the same as your relaxed posture while you're watching TV or reading a book. Instead, you need to have your body properly aligned to avoid pain while you create. If you are seated, make sure the height of your chair is adjusted so you are not reaching up to your sewing machine. Bend your arms and be sure your forearms rest almost on a parallel plane with the sewing surface. Another aspect of posture to check out is the alignment of your spine while you are sewing. If your chest is puffed out and your hips are rotated slightly forward (as though you are dumping your stomach into your lap), your spine will rest in its natural curve, and you can alleviate a lot of stress on your back muscles. If you stand while at

your design wall, for example, be sure to distribute your weight evenly over your feet. Standing on one foot or the other will quickly make you uncomfortable and stress your hips and back. You should also try to roll your pelvis forward to allow your spine to rest more naturally. If at any point in time you experience pain, STOP. Do not try to work through your pain. Pain is a clear signal to stop what you are doing; it also impedes your creativity.

Mental preparations

The next thing to address is your frame of mind. I'd like first to discuss what it means to be centered. The word "center" is a popular one these days. When you're centered, your mind and body are in a combined state of heightened awareness and increased focus. Studies show you are more productive in this state and feel more fulfilled.

Centering is a natural state of being. You have already been there many times when everything seemed to be going great or during a special event in your life. Remembering and visualizing just such a time in your own life can center you and allow you to begin to recognize what a "centered" state feels like to you.

With practice, you can choose to be centered at any point in your life, even when the world seems to be falling apart (e.g., three show rejections arrive in the mail at once). This is the transformative power of centering. Centering allows you to maintain a calm aura. By implementing a breathing practice as you sew (even when



Judy Warner demonstrates typical (poor) posture, good posture, and a basic stretch.

changing thread) and during your daily life (before answering a phone or turning on a computer), you can pattern your brain to recognize your own state of calm. With practice you can call on this centered state not just while sewing, but whenever something unexpected happens.

So how can you get there while creating? Before you begin, it is a good idea to leave all your troubles at the door; you can always pick them up again if you want when you finish. As you stretch, take a few deep breaths. Tom Crum has a practice he has written about called “Three Deep Breaths,” that I find helpful. For my first few breaths, I breathe deeply, filling my lungs completely and slowly exhaling, all the while checking my posture and releasing tension in my muscles. I can do this standing or while seated at the sewing machine. These are my Centering Breaths.

For my next few breaths, I get in touch with my vision or purpose. This could be my vision of myself as an art quilter – perhaps to express my view of the world through fiber art. I may choose a more specific purpose for my quilting session such as exploring a new technique, finishing up a piece for a show, or creating a gift. As I breathe, I visualize myself

embodying that vision or purpose in my work and achieving my results. These Possibility Breaths are actually engaging my mind in my breathing process and strengthening my mind/body connection. It is important to visualize realistic goals for yourself. And, it’s important to be willing to change a goal when it’s no longer appropriate. You have to be willing to let it go and adapt. When you are centered, you will have greater clarity and courage to make changes. Remember, change is not a bad thing; it is often necessary. When you are centered, you will be able to address any change with enthusiasm and curiosity instead of fear.

This leads me to the third stage of breathing and mental preparation: I breathe some Discovery Breaths. At this point, I remind myself that my session is a time to learn and enjoy. If something happens while I am quilting that I am displeased with, I give myself permission to ask, “What can I learn here?” rather than get aggravated with myself. For instance, Michele Ann L’Heureux in the SAQA Visioning Project recently shared, “I now try to look at what I would have once called a “flaw” as an unexpected design element. That element may not have been in my original plan,

but the piece itself wanted it there, so there it stays.” This transforms a potentially negative, energy-draining event into a positive experience.

It is very important to distinguish between perfection and discovery. When you try to be perfect, perform a certain way, or have your work be as good as someone else’s, you impede your ability to create your own work. Setting an artistic standard (not a quality standard, but one about expression) that is not based on your own inner voice is debilitating. It will lead to a loop of excuses or a fear of failure. You cannot move forward if you always want to control the outcome. You must be open to possibilities and let things happen. If you find yourself mired in negative thoughts and judgments, be sure to refocus. Stretch. Start your breathing work again. This is even true before you fix a mistake in your artwork. Never try to rip out quilting when you’re angry or disappointed with yourself.

Creating rituals

Being centered requires practice and patience. Ask yourself: What are some positive mind/body practices that I can create around my quilt art? Consider repetitive acts that you do often when sewing and how you

see “Preparing” on page 43

Journey 65

An adventure with an unlikely companion

by Laurie Hill Gibb

When we start down a creative path we never know where it will lead, especially if we stay open to possibilities. Little did I realize my path would be a literal journey down a path, or should I say a road—a 20,000-mile road.

My journey began when I decided to honor my 65th birthday by doing something extraordinarily different from the way I normally lived my life. I decided to spend a year traveling by myself. My first step was to find a way to maximize my modest retirement funds from my career as a teacher. Just as our minds mull over technical challenges in our art, my mind began to play with possibilities. It was the fond memories of my Volkswagen camper from the 60s—not a hippie van, but a well-used family-of-four-van—that provided the perfect solution.

I told friends I was looking to buy a used VW camper. Very soon, a friend called with information about a used 1995 Eurovan for sale not too far from my home. I went to Boulder, checked out the van, and purchased it, thus marking the beginning of a long relationship with Turtle, my beloved transportation, home, studio, and confidante. Turtle provided just the right amount of maneuverability, coziness, ease, economy, and flexibility. Add to that her pull-down shell and tightly locking doors, and I could be comfortably and safely tucked away for the night—just like a turtle. I know, it sounds just too weird. I never thought I'd be one of those people obsessed with a vehicle. I

thought only guys did that. I was wrong.

I found the perfect tenant for my townhouse in Denver, stored my personal belongings in my garage, and Turtle and I struck out on Highway 36 heading northwest from Denver into Rocky Mountain National Park. Launching my trip from a place dear to my heart gave me courage and enabled me to catch my breath after months of tying up loose ends and making trip preparations. Rocky Mountain National Park set the tone for the rest of the trip. I intended to spend as much time as possible in natural environments.

I also planned to visit galleries and art museums of all sizes. Years earlier, my artist daughter and I had made a pact to visit art museums around the world. We had visited them in Denver, Santa Fe, Chicago, and Italy. Even though my daughter was not joining me on this adventure, I knew this would be a terrific opportunity to add to my list of visits.

And finally, I knew I wanted to spend time furthering my explorations as an artist. I had spent the year prior to my trip taking Jane Dunnewold's study course by mail and hoped to implement what I had learned in new works influenced by my travels. I applied for artist residencies across the U.S., ultimately accepting three of the ones I was offered. I was at Peter's Valley Craft Center in New Jersey during November and found that the well-equipped studio, the natural environment, and the fellow artists provided an exciting environment for my experimentation. In



Turtle

February, I stayed at the comfortable and nurturing environment of the Sustainable Arts Society in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Georgia. When I could tear myself away from the delicious cooking of Elma Ettman's French chef, I worked happily in the Apple House studio. In April, I shared a large studio located in the pine-scented Rockies of New Mexico with a resident sculptor. These three residencies, spaced throughout the months, gave me a chance to absorb the many experiences on the road. Then, just in the nick of time, they gave me the space to plunge openly and gratefully into my art.

The journey was an opportunity to approach each day with the openness of an artist. What if? What if I decide to go down this road? What if I check out this five-and-dime store, much like the one from my childhood? What if I find the college and see if they have a gallery? What if I take the train into Chicago each day? What if I do a web search for this state? What if I don't find a campground before it gets dark? What if I walk down the beach with my eyes closed?



Putting myself into the unknown, day after day, and doing it with as little anticipation and expectation as I could, allowed me to develop an attitude of wonder and curiosity that I had never experienced before. Letting go of fear and letting go of the desire to compare one location or experience with another, or one day with the one before, left more space in my mind to see more and to be less judgmental than I would have been at home.

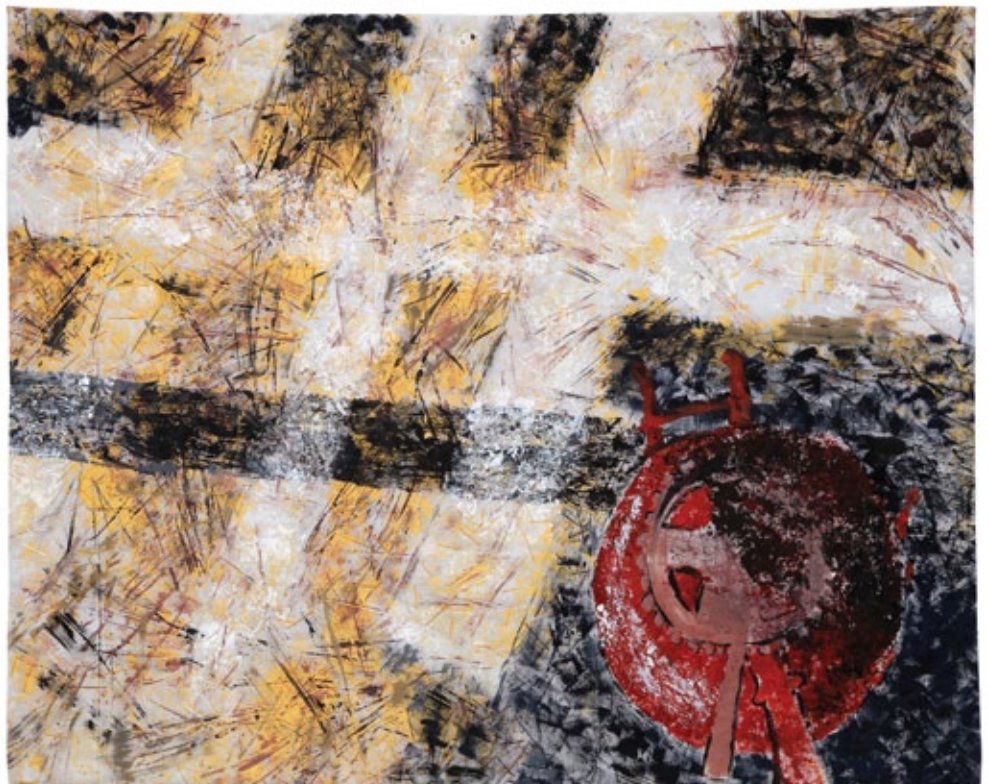
Since returning home to my Denver studio, I've tried to remember the attitudes which served me so well on my journey. The childlike sense of wonder and curiosity I discovered on the road allowed me to play more. Now I sometimes ask myself, "Am I having fun? If not, why not?" It's not easy to continue this new journey. I have certainly had times when I wish I could take to the road again. I remind myself that approaching each day with a sense of gratitude and wonder does so much to help me appreciate the life I live back at home in my "now" real world. As a result, I've tried to change my attitude about

my work. When I start to compare my current art with some of my former work or with that of other artists, I question whether it serves any useful purpose, or rather, does it limit me? Now, when I feel fearful about failure, I can often catch myself, take a break from my work, do something relaxing, and then later go back to my studio. Critical evaluation of your own work can be very helpful, but making yourself feel inadequate is not. On the road, I was more curious than judgmental. Today, I try to recapture that feeling rather than revert to former habits involving stifling thoughts.

Turtle sits outside waiting for our next trip. When I climb behind the wheel I stroke the smooth vinyl on her dashboard and say, "Nice Turtle. I love you, Turtle." How could I not? I had this companion who listened and didn't talk back. She'd sing to me, protect me, lull me, and even cook for me! What more could I ask?

Meanwhile, I'm continuing my journey by creating an art installation based on the experience. This seems like a monumental task. But, hey, I just need to take it one mile at a time and see where it leads. ▼

SAQA active member Laurie Hill Gibb lives in Denver, Colorado. Her website is www.lauriehillgibb.com.



Where Have All The Horses Gone?
27 x 35 inches ©Laurie Hill Gibb

Gilda's Club quilts

by Susanne McCoy

Imagine the challenges faced by an art quilter teaching non-sewers the joys of creating through traditional quilting. Art quilter Susanne McCoy shares her story of meeting, and relishing, that challenge.

Two years ago I retired from the professional side of fiber art—teaching in quilt shops around the state, publishing my patterns, and exhibiting in various venues. I had already retired from a business career and found that I didn't want a second career. As I wondered what my next challenge would be, I stumbled into volunteer work that was meant for me. It actually may have been a bigger challenge for me, as an art quilter, than for someone more accustomed to teaching those who've never sewn before.

In early 2009, Gilda's Club of South Florida began looking for someone to teach quilting. I responded immediately. I love to teach and I'd been a teacher in my business career, teaching everything from computer basics to programming languages and management skills. As an art quilt teacher, I loved teaching students to break the rules of traditional quilting and trust themselves as they created with fabric. However, I had never taught any traditional quilting—nor had I taught students who had never sewn on a sewing machine.

Gilda's Club, with centers in over 20 cities in the United States, is a charitable organization named for the late comedienne, Gilda Radner. The

organization provides free support, classes, programs, and counseling for cancer patients, survivors, their families, and anyone else affected by the disease. In South Florida, Gilda's Club operates out of a wonderfully grand "old Florida" stucco home, surrounded by lush grounds and wandering peacocks in downtown Fort Lauderdale.

I agreed to teach a twice-monthly class, initially two hours in length. I realized at least three challenges immediately. First, students would come and go depending on their progress in cancer treatment or their commitment to caring for a family member. Second, and perhaps more daunting, I would have students of all levels of experience: from experienced quilters to people who had no sewing or quilting skills. Quite soon I realized that another challenge would be teaching in a facility with no fabric, notions, or tools. I was definitely spoiled by teaching in quilt shops! I also had no budget. But what's better than a challenge, right? We had a classroom and students and so my backup plan, to teach quilting concepts and hand piecing, was put into action.

What I hadn't thought through, until I began preparing for the first

class, was that I had no work or samples to use to teach beginners or to teach "traditional" quilting. I'm an art quilter—and I was going to teach students with no sewing experience – quite a leap! Much of my work is geometric but nothing is "regular," and I have always designed my own work. As a result, I went back to basics and designed a simple one-patch, four-patch lap quilt with 5" and 9½" squares. I made a sample, backed it with fleece, and tied it. We hung it prominently in Gilda's Club to entice prospective students.

By the time the class started, friends in my local quilt guild had donated enough squares so that each student would have ample blocks for a quilt. Finally, in November 2009, the class started with four to six members. Five women became regulars, while several others came in and out when they were available. The generosity of my quilting friends made progress so much easier. Two sewing machines were donated and I was able to find another at a yard sale. Since that time, two more have been donated. I was faced with a different but enjoyable challenge as I tried to stay one step ahead of my students with sewing machines unfamiliar to me. I joked that if after their "freshman



Gilda's Club participants proudly display their work.

year" they could thread a machine, they'd be ready for their sophomore year. I regularly received donations of tools such as rulers, rotary cutters, and cutting mats. The staff at Gilda's Club responded by graciously sharing some of their scarce storage space with us.

In the beginning, I used my own quilts as samples as I talked through basic quilting terms and techniques. I planned to introduce a new idea or technique fairly regularly, as I would be doing if I were teaching short classes in a quilt shop. However, I wasn't able to follow that plan. Though I've had the pleasure of seeing some of the same students throughout the class, many were not always ready for new techniques when I hoped they would be. Soon, I stopped writing outlines and goals, and I changed my approach. Now whenever we encounter something new, I have a "teaching moment." If I have the right quilts with me, I can teach on the spot. If I don't,

I bring appropriate work with me the next time to help illustrate new techniques. In this way we've covered straight and curved piecing, fusing, paper-piecing, machine appliqué, and several surface design techniques.

To date, members of the class have made nine quilts and are going strong making more. Since making their first quilts, members are now pretty clear about what they'd like to do next—typically lap quilts for friends or family members. But in order to use up all our scraps, a friend and I also teach several classes demonstrating small projects such as placemats and table runners. The class is now three hours in length, and we stay in touch between classes. We've had students come and go, and because we're at Gilda's Club, three of the students have lost family members. We get a lot of quilting done, but there's also a lot of support among the class members. I was the recipient of a tremendous amount of understanding and emotional sustenance when my

mother became ill and died during this past year. We celebrate birthdays and other events, and it seems that we've become an extended family.

I feel so honored to be teaching these women. They are eager to learn and excited about their next project, even if the week has been a particularly hard one for them. I think they have found some of the same meditative quality in sewing that I always have. They have given me their time, attention, and friendship. I have found that teaching beginners is as challenging as anything I could be doing. It seems ironic now that I worried about how I might grow and stay challenged. Nothing could be further from the truth. I have learned so much this year, and I continue to find every session challenging, but always so rewarding. ▼

SAQA active member Susanne McCoy is an art quilter and teacher from Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Her website is www.susannequilts.com.

In pursuit of exhibition opportunities

by Anna Hergert

If exhibiting your art is on your list of goals, I hope my experiences in both the U.S. and Canada will provide ideas you can use to approach galleries, museums, and other venues.

In 2003, as I was nearing the end of my formal art and design education, my peers urged me to get my work “out there.” Despite my lack of art marketing experience, I decided to assemble a portfolio. After conducting some research, I concluded I needed four elements for a successful initial

portfolio: a professional curriculum vitae, a one-page biography, a concise artist statement, and ten professionally photographed images of my work, including detailed descriptions with the artwork’s size and materials. I approached the task as if I were applying for a job.

On the advice of one of my instructors, I sent my first portfolio to the LaConner Quilt Museum in Washington during the fall of 2003. In my proposal, I explained that my body of

work was expanding and that I would have enough pieces for the museum to choose from for a cohesive exhibition should I be selected as a featured artist. Three months later I received the exciting news that the museum was offering me their main exhibition space for a solo show from mid-July through mid-September 2005.

Concurrently, I answered calls for entry for juried exhibitions, even those stating that only established artists need apply. I wondered, “What constitutes an established artist? Can I enter, even with little or no exhibition experience?” I gathered up all my courage and decided to forge ahead. Taking the chance paid off and I was thrilled to receive acceptance letters.

Every time my work was accepted into a juried exhibition, I added the information to my professional CV. Along with responding to calls for entry, I pursued my goal to be part of various art groups. I became a professional member of SAQA and, based on the written critique of peers, I was accepted into the Alberta Society of Artists (ASA) and the Society of Canadian Artists (CSA). While SAQA is focused on art quilts, I believed it was necessary to gain acceptance in the fine art world as well. From the start, I have considered myself to be a visual artist. I believe we produce art much like painters and, therefore, I did not hesitate to enter



The Wind

33 x 25 inches
©Anna Hergert

juried competitions of all disciplines. Becoming a full member of both the ASA and CSA brought respect for my art form and opened a number of doors for showcasing various bodies of work.

For the first two years of my art quilt career, submitting portfolios to galleries and answering calls for entry was all it took to find exhibition opportunities. I found many of my submission opportunities through the newsletters and bulletins distributed by the various art groups of which I was a member. I started out with venues where fiber art was not a foreign concept. During that time I was fortunate enough to be accepted everywhere I applied. Commitment management became very important—a lesson I learned after accepting invitations for two solo shows—one in the U.S. and another in Germany, with overlapping exhibition dates.

Throughout my art career, I have also made it a point to visit museums and galleries regularly, even while I'm on vacation. Gallery attendants and volunteers are a great source of information. I keep a small notebook in my purse to jot down notes, ideas, thoughts, and inspiration from our conversations for future reference. Speaking with them has also led to terrific opportunities. For example, a conversation with a volunteer during a visit to the Latimer Quilt & Textile Center in Oregon led to an offer for a solo exhibition during the summer of 2009.

Securing venues, preparing the work, delivering it, and, in some cases, mounting an exhibition can be a full-time job. I make every effort to work closely with museum directors and gallery operators; regular communication via email and telephone is a key factor in the success of an exhibition regardless of where it opens. I

attribute another solo exhibition, scheduled for the summer of 2011, at a gallery on the Sunshine Coast of British Columbia, to my willingness to work closely with the gallery.

On a regular basis, I continue to update my portfolio. Once a month I look over my professional artist CV, adding juried and invitational exhibition experiences, along with any additional pertinent information. I gather reviews of my work. My current portfolio is comprised of a cover letter, my artist CV, my artist statement, a brief bio, copies of reviews of my work, and a CD with a minimum of ten full images and ten detail images of recent work. I also include an itemized printed list describing the work on the CD, including sizes and materials. When I identify a gallery to whom I'd like to submit my work, I place all my documents in a black folder and affix an art postcard showing my work onto the front cover to capture the selection committee's attention. My contact information is listed both on the letterhead and on a business card attached to the inside of the folder. I always start out with an introductory letter, a proposal, and portfolio images before I pick up the phone or make an appointment to meet in person.

Generally, I allow two weeks for my portfolio to arrive at its destination; I follow up with an email if I have not heard from the gallery by then. I may also make a phone call to confirm the arrival of my portfolio and to establish the selection timeframe. This takes less than five minutes and can be a critical step in opening a dialogue with the gallery. I believe it is reasonable to wait three months before contacting the gallery again after the initial conversation. Contacting a gallery again does two things: (1) you confirm for the gallery director that you are committed to

your art career, and (2) you refresh the director's memory of you and your art.

As I look toward my future, I continue to reflect on my past experiences. I am very happy with my exhibition history. Though I can't say why I've enjoyed such success, one fact is certain: I have worked steadily to seek venues to showcase my art. Along the way, I've recognized and embraced new opportunities, and I'm grateful for these special chances. I believe there is no magic formula to exhibiting your art, but I do know success requires dedication and hard work. Be sure to seek out and recognize opportunities and embrace any challenges offered to you. Create art that comes from your soul and stay true to yourself. With hard work both in the studio and in your marketing efforts, you will achieve success and recognition. ▼

SAQA professional artist member Anna Hergert is an artist and teacher of the year nominee. She lives in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Canada and her website is www.annahergert.com.

Resources

Living the Artist's Life – A Guide to Growing, Persevering, and Succeeding in the Art World

by Paul Dorrell
Hillstead Publishing, Kansas City, 2005
ISBN # 0-974-9552-0-5

The Business of Being an Artist

by Daniel Grant
Allworth Press, New York, 2000
ISBN # 1-58115-056-3

How to Survive & Prosper as an Artist – Selling Yourself Without Selling Your Soul

by Caroll Michels
Henry Hold & Company, New York, 2001
ISBN # 0-8050-6800-7

Social Networking 101: A guide to Facebook

by Lisa Chipetine

I have Friends and Fans on Facebook (1,118 at last count), I'm being followed on Twitter and linked to on LinkedIn. What is the purpose of all of this new technology, you might ask? Are people so lonely today that they need to reach out over the airwaves for contact? Well, yes and no. Social networking is all about relationships, being transparent, developing trust, and generating conversations.

Although technology is my business, most of my experimental forays are SAQA driven. Email, though effective, becomes painful if you want to keep in touch with 2,600 artists. You need to pay for a special distribution service to send this type of bulk or broadcast email. Wouldn't it be great if I just had a big online bulletin board where my artist friends could come and see what I am up to, on their terms? A place where I could post photos, audio recordings, videos, or links to cool stuff I find online? A place where, depending on the person, I can decide exactly what they are allowed to see and what they are not? Enter Facebook.

Facebook is the world's biggest bulletin board. It's not a public site; you have to be member and log in to see any information and interact with other members. You only share as much as you are comfortable sharing about yourself. For me, it's an immediate way to reach hundreds of artists and potential contacts with just one post.

To get you started, Facebook's software takes a look at your **Profile**

information and makes suggestions for "friends" (connections) you should hook up with. You can send an invitation to these people and they have to "confirm" you before you are officially friends (connected).

Once you find your friends on Facebook, you can communicate with them in a variety of ways: by posting on their walls, by sending them private messages (like email), or through online **Chat** (Facebook will tell you if your friends are online, ready for active chat). You can also set up your account settings so that if someone sends you a message or posts on your wall an email will be sent to notify you.

The Wall

The **Wall** is like bulletin board in the library or grocery store— only it's all yours. People can post on your wall, and your posts will be retained on your wall. It's your space to control. When you make a post, you can decide whether it will be seen by everyone, your friends, friends of friends, or any custom group of people. This is not an all or nothing type of system. You can have postings that only certain subsets of friends see, and others for everyone. Personally, I never designate who sees what on my Facebook account. If something is posted online (and thus is part of my digital footprint) then it had better be something I don't mind everyone seeing. But you may want to have a distinction between personal postings and something for the general public. You

get to your wall by clicking on your name or picture at the top of the left sidebar on the home page.

You can post plain text content, links, photographs, and videos. If you see something on another friend's page, you can click **Share** to post it to your wall and share it with your network of friends. The cool thing is that the system will automatically generate an image and title for you if you copy and paste a web address into the link box. (For example, during the SAQA auction, I posted individual quilts on my Facebook page.) You can post videos from YouTube. You can also create your own videos with a camera or webcam and upload them to Facebook

Direct, cheap, instant marketing

Facebook works on what I call the "Breck Girl" viral (word-of-mouth) marketing model. Remember the Breck Girl commercial? "And she told two friends, and so on ... and so on ... and so on?" Through this online, viral platform you are hoping to engage your friendship connections and develop a connection with them through your posts to Facebook. Online marketing is based on a trust connection; if individuals identify with you on some level, they'll feel connected to you and thus trust you. This also applies to whatever product or service you are offering.

For example, my husband and I rescue animals as part of the Pilots N Paws program. I make postings relevant to these rescues as well as posts related to animals in general.



Other animal lovers who read this probably feel an immediate connection to me. The fact that we volunteer in saving animals helps engage my readers with a level of trust. This could translate into them hiring me to teach at their local guild. This shows how the connection does *not* have to relate to the product you are selling. It could come from a multitude of areas: children, other hobbies, or activities such as sports, cultural activities, books, etc. The key is to develop these relationships through the connection an individual feels toward you. Someone may then share information you provide on exhibitions or gallery events you are in—or even your website or blog (which should be part of your profile).

Event listings

Say you have a quilt showing in Virginia, and you live in California, but you want anyone in the Virginia area to go. You could post the event on Facebook. Your friends could then potentially share the event on their wall for their friends

... and so on ...and so on....and so on. Perhaps they have relatives or friends in Virginia who enjoy art.

To create an Event, click **Event** in the left sidebar. You can invite people and create an RSVP list (a potentially big cost savings in print mailings if your contacts start to connect with you on Facebook). You can also see the guest list, which may help in planning food, logistics, etc.

Notice that it may be helpful to view the guest lists of events you have been invited to as well. You could “friend” people on that list who may be interested in your events as well.

Once you have a personal account on Facebook, you can set up a **Page** for your business. You can only set up a business page through a personal account. People who “like” your page are **Fans**. An important note: if you have someone else set up a page for your business through their personal account, they own the page. So if you have a falling out, there is no recourse to get control of your page back. However,

if you would like to have someone else administer your page, you can give them administrator privileges, which you can take away if necessary. Best practice: always set up your business page through your own personal Facebook account, regardless of whether you post on your page or not.

Setting up a **Page** is a way to have a clear distinction between your business and personal life. It also enables you to use Facebook ads. You can decide on a daily budgeted figure you want to spend on your ad, which will drive how many times it is shown on Facebook. Ads can be done with local geographical parameters. For example, if you teach locally in your studio or have a quilt shop without online ordering capabilities, this may be the way to go.

Cultivating your online presence and network of contacts can save you hundreds of dollars in marketing materials and services. And all you have to do is share a little about yourself—not the whole kit and caboodle. You can still remain private and enjoy the benefits of this technology. So enjoy! ▼

Former SAQA President Lisa Chipetine is a contemporary quilter living in West Hempstead, New York. Her website is www.threadplay.com.

Editor's note: Find more information about other forms of social networking like LinkedIn and Twitter at Lisa's technology blog for beginners: www.technologysimplyspeaking.com.

United States restricts access for international teacher

by Pamela Allen

I had forgotten that I had been interviewed for an article published in the Fall 2010 *SAQA Journal* about artists who cross national borders to teach. Rereading the article recently was painfully ironic because, since my interview, the United States has banned me from ever teaching over the border, unless I am doing so at a university or college. As a result, I thought other members might like to hear about my experience and what precipitated this disaster.

I think most teachers, if they're honest, are aware that there must be some restrictions concerning temporary employment across national lines. Nonetheless, we tend to follow a "don't ask, don't tell" strategy when questioned by the border officers. For eight years, I too responded to questions about my reasons for entering the country with a semi-true statement: I would be attending a quilt show, visiting friends, or going to a conference. These would explain why I had lots of quilts and sewing gear in my luggage should they decide to search me randomly. But what would you do if the officer asked you outright if you would be earning any money during your trip?

That's exactly the question that was put to me at the Ontario-Michigan border last spring. There I was, just hours away from a four-day gig, with a suitcase full of quilts and a knapsack containing my contract to teach three workshops and to conduct a lecture for a Detroit guild. I felt I had no choice but to answer honestly, knowing they would find these things upon searching my car. Alas, things

went rapidly downhill. My car keys were taken, my car was searched, my fingerprints and photo were taken, I was subjected to a lengthy interview, and, finally, I received an ignominious escort by a flashing patrol car back to my own border.

The Detroit guild I had planned to visit wasn't able to find a replacement at such short notice. They had to cancel their meeting room and all the accommodations, some at a cost. I wasted two days traveling, a hotel overnight at the border and travel expenses. Though neither of us asked for compensation from the other, which seems fair to me, we each lost money because I was prohibited from entering the country.

I then did a good deal of research concerning the letter of the law regarding cross-border teaching. Unfortunately, for Canadians, it's almost impossible to do it legally. There are several options I pursued. The short term visa for temporary work is obviously for business people as it requires the prospective employer to petition the government using a 30-page application form. The petition cost is over \$1,000. The special status of a professional with extraordinary skills also requires completion of a lengthy application and involves the same high fee.

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) does allow a short-term professional visa costing approximately \$50 which you can apply for as you cross the border. It requires proof of a degree (in my case, my B.F.A.) and proof of professional status both in your field and teaching

(at the university level). Finally, you must have a letter from your employer describing in detail the job you will be doing, where and when you will be conducting business, and for what salary. On two separate occasions I brought all this to the U.S. border, and twice I was denied entry. The explanation I received the third and final time was that the guilds and quilt festivals cited in my application were not deemed qualified employers. Because of these three denied entries, my passport is now flagged, and I am delayed and searched whenever I enter the United States.

The guilds whose visits I had to cancel were outraged about the denial of entry. I believe some contacted their government representatives. Most were under the impression, as I was, that visa restrictions didn't apply to a cultural exchange such as this. They also believed they could hire an expert to share knowledge. This wasn't a case of a foreigner taking a job from Americans. The guilds assumed that as a teacher, I could not be replaced by someone local; I offered something unique. The guilds also did not know they weren't considered qualified employers.

I hoped that something could legally be done to remedy the ban and contacted my Member of Parliament for advice from the Canadian perspective. I was hoping NAFTA would include some type of rider covering cultural exchange. His office did research and came up with the same information I received from the U.S. Border Patrol: there is only one visa for professional interplay,

and it would allow me to teach *only* at universities or colleges. This ruled out any quilt guild, retreat, or festival opportunity.

The ban on my teaching in the United States has cost me most of my teaching income. I was averaging six to eight opportunities a year, most of which took place in the U.S. The biggest losses came from times I would have taught at a weeklong event such as International Quilt Festival in Houston or any Mancuso festival. My inability to teach at retreats like Asilomar was also a big loss. Cancelling these has significantly compromised my income. I have traveled overseas once to teach in South Africa and had no problems entering the country on that occasion.

After the initial trauma of this loss, I embarked on a Plan B: teaching online. I had already been offering one online class a year, in the winter

when traveling from Canada can be difficult. As it has turned out, the classes have been quite successful, albeit more time consuming.

The online course, which deals with elements and principles of art, lasts four weeks, with a new assignment issued every week. I do a detailed critique of work in progress and often tweak it in Photoshop to illustrate my suggestions. This particular feature seems to be a big hit with students, and it's not possible in a classroom situation. The assignments are similar to the classroom, and some students are more likely to participate online. Over the years, my online students have returned for more classes, and we have become a nicely bonded group of learners.

I am convinced something has changed with the administration of the border patrol. Could it be they're trying to increase their numbers

for statistics? At any rate, I suggest caution for anyone crossing into the United States to teach. In all three of my attempts, I was treated in a rude and hostile manner and made to feel like a criminal. I have been warned not to try at another border crossing because they have all the details about me in the system now. Since my experience has become well known, I have heard several stories about similar experiences when crossing into Canada as well.

It may be that a groundswell action is required to urge our legislators to re-evaluate this petty restriction of cultural exchange. Please consider contacting your legislative representatives to find ways for us to share knowledge across borders. ▼

SAQA professional artist member Pamela Allen is a fiber artist and teacher living in Kingston, Ontario, Canada. Her website is pamelart2.homestead.com/quiltythings.html.

It works both ways...

In the summer of 2010, Karen Miller was turned away at the border as she tried to cross from Maine into Canada. She was scheduled to teach two katasome technique classes to members of the Yellowknife Quilt Guild, a guild which had previously successfully brought teachers into the country.

Prior to her departure, Karen's husband had done a research on the terms of the temporary foreign worker guidelines allowing seminar leaders to cross the border without a labor permit. According to Canadian Customs, commercial speakers or seminar leaders may enter the country without a labor permit "provided the seminar to be given by the foreign speaker entering under this provision does not last longer than five days."* Karen's two-and-a-half-day seminar met this requirement, and she had also obtained a confirmation letter from the seminar organizers. Coupled with the Guild's assurances, they believed they had done all they could to be in compliance.

The border patrol believed otherwise. Since Karen was providing hands-on training, the border officials wanted the seminar organizer to provide a labor market survey

to prove there was no one in Canada who could teach this technique. Karen contacted the organizer in Ontario, who applied pressure somewhere. When Karen and her husband returned the next day, they were allowed to enter the country, but the three immigration officers they met all interpreted the permit requirements differently. One officer even said they needed a separate permit for each class. Fortunately, they were allowed to enter with only one permit, but had to pay \$150 to receive it. Karen believes their success boiled down to simply this: "I think the young woman who finally let us in took pity on me because she was a yarn dyer."

*The Canadian Temporary Foreign Workers Guidelines for work without a work permit R186(j) was amended in September, 2010. It precludes entry without a permit for training purposes. The statute reads, "Not included in R186(j) are commercial speakers who are hired by a Canadian entity to provide training services, or guest instructors of a particular sport coming to teach weekend seminars. Training activities are viewed as providing a service to Canadians, and therefore are considered an entry into the labour market. In these cases, other entry options must be explored including HRSDC/SC LMOs or the NAFTA Professional category which allows for professionals to provide training services under some circumstances."

SAQA CREAM Award winner at Quilt National '11

Judy Kirpich

Tacoma Park, Maryland

CREAM (Cathy Rasmussen Emerging Artist Award) winner Judy Kirpich says:

“ *Circles No. 4* explores the tension I have felt during the last two years of economic turmoil in our country. While my compositions may appear to be a random assortment of circles and lines, they are all placed quite deliberately. The technique I use involves cutting over and over into a “finished” top — my version of Russian roulette, since one false cut can, and has, ruined months of work. ”

SAQA's CREAM award is given to a first-time exhibitor. It is funded through donations from SAQA members.



Judy Kirpich with CREAM award winner *Circles No. 4* (39 x 35 inches, ©2010)

Sleep Tight

doll quilts and their beds

Selvedge Magazine, the International Quilt Festival would like to invite you to take part in our doll bed quilt competition. Deadline for all entries: 31 July 2011, to find out more visit www.callforentriesiqfselfedge.com



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A vibrant, colorful advertisement for eQuilter.com. The background is a collage of various images including city buildings, a taxi, a person, and quilting-related items. The text 'City Life' is prominently displayed in large, stylized letters. Below it, the website 'www.eQuilter.com' is listed, along with 'USA Toll Free: 877-322-7423' and 'Phone: 303-527-0856'. The phrase 'largest fabric selection' and 'best fabric images' are also included. At the bottom, the website name 'eQuilter.com' is written in large, colorful letters, with a rainbow and a spool of thread integrated into the design.

Trisha Hassler from page 9

I see something about the room to inspire some element of the work. I work intuitively, so open conversation and good listening skills serve me well.

Being a member of a professional organization like SAQA has given my work good exposure through the website and *Portfolios*. However, I've had very little success with exhibitions because shipping restrictions exclude all of my work, and that has been frustrating. I think the organization is good for art quilters, but not as well matched for the mixed media artwork that I do.

I publish a studio newsletter highlighting upcoming events and information about current projects. My goal is to expand my horizons and show my work in more venues. I would also like to participate in an artist-in-residency. ▼

SAQA professional artist member Trisha Hassler is a mixed media artist living in Portland, Oregon. Her website is trishahassler.com.

SAQA trunk show available for viewing

This is a Quilt, SAQA's second traveling trunk show, is now available to come to your region. It was designed to showcase the diversity of talent within our SAQA membership and to support SAQA's mission to "promote the art quilt through education, exhibitions, professional development, and documentation." Curators Deb Cashatt and Kris Sazaki divided all the artwork into trunk show groupings, with each trunk containing 30-50 fiber art pieces.

Trunk shows are a wonderful way for members and non-members alike to view and engage with quilts made using a wide variety of styles, techniques, and fibers. Some regions might want to organize special meetings highlighting the trunk show and invite local quilt groups to view the works. Other regions might want to use the trunk show as the basis for a critique session, while still others might consider exhibiting the trunk show in their local libraries or art centers.

If you are interested in having one of the trunks come to a venue or meeting near you, please contact your regional representative. The trunk show is free to regions, but SAQA will gratefully accept donations to help offset the cost of shipping.

2010 budget report

by Nelda Warkentin, Treasurer



With an actual reserve of \$72,000, SAQA continues to be in good shape financially. In 2010, membership dues and donor contributions comprised over half of SAQA's budget.

A special thank you to Pokey Bolton and Jack Walsh for volunteering their time on the finance committee. New board members Mary Pal and Nancy Bavor have joined the finance committee in 2011.

SAQA's 2010 income and expenditures:

2010 Income

Membership dues	\$162,471
Donations – individuals	60,636
Donations – corporate	11,250
Grant – NEA	23,611
Auction income	52,450
Conference income ¹	29,819
Exhibition fees	20,050
Product sales and other income	45,726
Interest on savings accounts	670

Income total **\$406,683**

2010 Expenditures

Member services (<i>Journal</i> , <i>Portfolio</i> , marketing, and website)	\$ 234,717
Administration (salaries, rent, office supplies)	98,708
Conference expenses ¹	58,595
Exhibition expenses	48,975

Expenditures Total **\$440,995**

Liberty Bank Balances as of December 31, 2010

Checking	\$17,925
Savings (including CREAM Fund, Education Fund)	83,261

Total² **\$101,186**

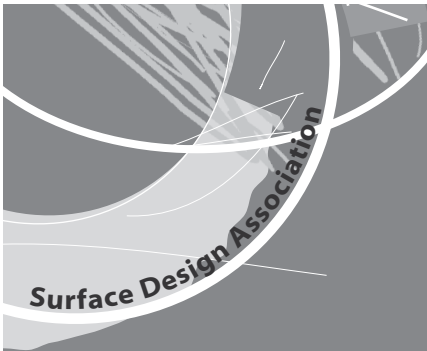
¹Includes registration income for SAQA conference in Denver 2011 and expenses from joint SAQA/SDA conference in San Francisco 2010. The amounts skew the budget somewhat, as the income and expenses for a particular conference overlap two fiscal years.

²Total includes \$30,000 to be paid for Denver conference.

Red thread from page 15

tablecloth, or an awkward teen hunched over her book. Give yourself a moment. Look again. What are you feeling—loss, joy, anger, avoidance? Can you be more specific? Is there a place, another person, or an incident you are connecting to? Whatever your answer, the result of your patience and inner listening will enrich your art. That symbol will expand and resurface in your work as energy, color, texture, line, movement, passion, or power. Its reappearance is inevitable because it has become part of you and part of your vocabulary, articulated in your work to a viewer eager to experience the richness of life through you. ▼

SAQA active member Carolyn Ryan is a textile artist specializing in printmaking and monoprints. She lives in Thousand Oaks, California. Her web site is carolynryanart.com.



The Surface Design Association is an international not-for-profit organization dedicated to education, research, critical thinking and promotion in the field of Surface Design. Members receive the Surface Design Journal and SDA Newsletter.

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Preparing from page 29

could transform them. Also consider the environment in which you sew. Are there some ways to tweak your environment so it may be more conducive to creating art? There are as many answers to these questions as there are quilters. Each of us can reach our own, personalized center that benefits our lives and our art. All that we really need to test out these ideas is the ability to breathe. How wonderful! The possibility of decreased discomfort and increased creativity is just a breath away. ▼

SAQA active member Judy Warner is a quilt artist living in upstate New York and author of *From Chaos to Center: A Training Guide in the Art of Centering*. She blogs about quilting and life at www.explorationsinquilting.com.

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To find out more about SAQA, contact Martha Sielman, executive director, (860) 487-4199; execdirector@saqa.com; or visit our website at 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. Email articles to editor Carolyn Lee Vehslage at clvquilts@yahoo.com.

Deadlines for articles:

Summer: February 1
Fall: May 1
Winter: August 1
Spring: November 1

SAQA's 2011 benefit auction will start on Sept. 12, 2011.
www.saqa.com > **Benefit Auction**

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