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SAQA JOURNAL

STUDIO ART QUILT ASSOCIATES

2019 | Volume 29, No. 3



INSIDE: SUE RENO • BENEFIT AUCTION • HAVE PASSPORT, WILL TEACH • ART TALK • VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT • INSPIRED • EXPANDED JAM SHOWCASE • STUDIO SAFETY • MEMBER GALLERY • FORCED TO FLEE • SAN JOSE CONFERENCE

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IN THIS ISSUE

FEATURE ARTICLES:

Featured Artist: Sue Reno	8
Be safe and comfortable in your studio	14
Benefit Auction honors SAQA's 30th birthday	22
Tips for teaching around the world	31

COLUMNS:

Thoughts from the President	4
Editor's Notes	6
Art Talk: Walk to boost health and creativity	18
Inspired by photography: Caryl Bryer Fallert-Gentry	38

GALLERIES:

SAQA Global Exhibitions: <i>Forced to Flee</i>	16
JAM Showcase	20
Member Gallery: <i>Face Off</i>	26



SAQA NEWS

SAQA Award	7
Volunteer Spotlight:	
Georgia French	7
San Jose Conference:	
Threads of Innovation	28
In Memoriam	35

ON THE COVER:

Nancy Bardach

Bravo! Brava! 41 x 34 inches | 2018

From Member Gallery: **Face Off**, page 26.

QUICK NOTES

To find out more about SAQA, contact Martha Sielman, executive director, at 860-530-1551 or execdirector@saqa.com. Visit our website at www.saqa.com. Annual membership (U.S. and international): Artist/Associate, \$80; Juried Artist, \$145; Student (full time with copy of ID) \$45.

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Conference provides reminder of what's important



The Threads of Innovation conference in San Jose is now a wonderful memory. I know many of you shared my pleasure in the activities and speakers we enjoyed in California.

Sometimes at such an event, you have the honor to see something that makes you stop and think. This year, we were given the opportunity to hear from the Social Justice Sewing Academy (SJSA). I had the pleasure of meeting SJSA founder Sara Trail in Houston last year, but did not fully understand the organization's work. Sara is an amazing young woman who learned to sew at age 4, wrote a book at 13, and, after graduating from the Harvard School of Education, founded the Social Justice Sewing Academy in 2017. The organization is "piecing together youth voices, textile art, and community in a 21st century sewing circle." What a worthy mission! They introduce young people to sewing, empower them to express their concerns about social justice, and create opportunities for growth and change.

In San Jose, they included two of their participants in a panel presentation, Juan Tapia and Bryan Robinson, young men who have been able to create deeply meaningful quilts. Bryan's flag quilt moved many of us to tears. SJSA's main program relies

on donated fabrics and tools to allow young people to create blocks and whole quilts which are then sent to volunteer embroiderers to stitch and return. This amazing collaboration has resulted in quilts that express the social concerns of the makers. These quilts are being exhibited and winning awards at prestigious quilt shows, including the Modern Quilt Guild's QuiltCon. The pride in their work shown by these two young men was evident and inspiring, as was their connection to the women who helped complete their quilts.

I would encourage you all to look at their website, sjsacademy.com. I have signed up to be an embroiderer, as people from all over the world are welcome to be part of this amazing effort. When I return my blocks, I will also send some fabric from my stash, which is far larger than I will ever need, perhaps just like yours. Of course, cash donations are welcome as well. You can read more about

how SAQA members can help SJSA on page 29 as part of our convention coverage.

I know that there are many worthy programs throughout our communities, and it is important to support ones that you feel strongly about. SAQA has enabled me to see and think beyond my own little world and feel part of the larger community of like-minded souls. Sometimes we are so consumed by our own issues that we forget what is happening daily to thousands of others. It is good to be reminded.

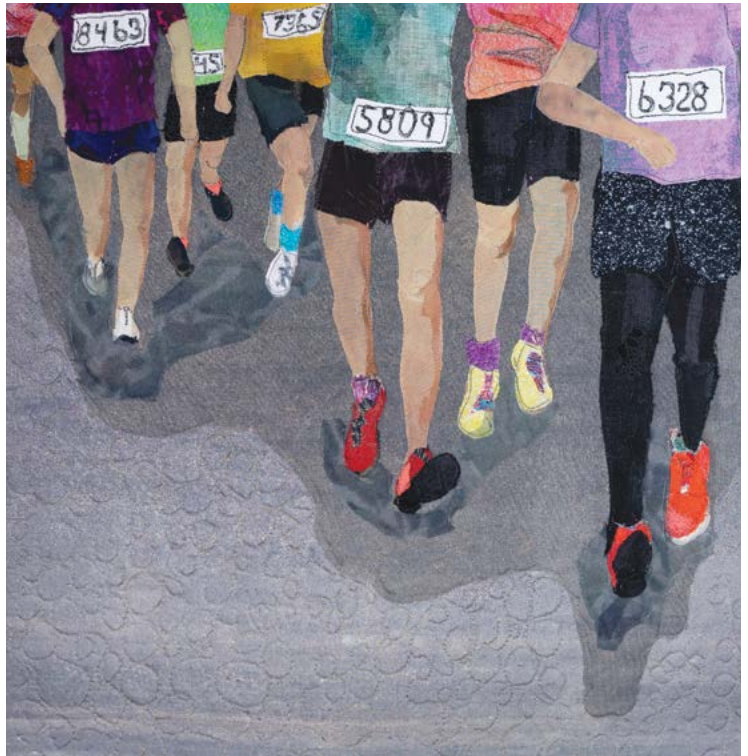
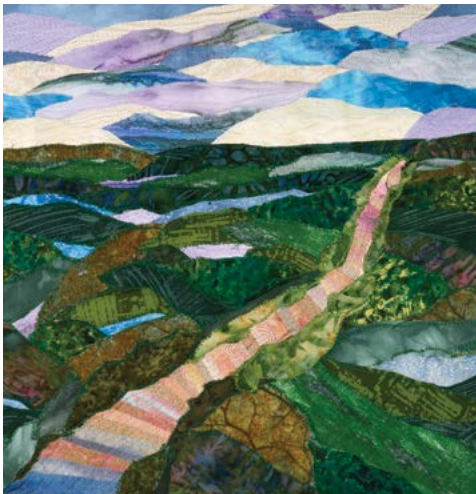
Regards,

Lisa Walton

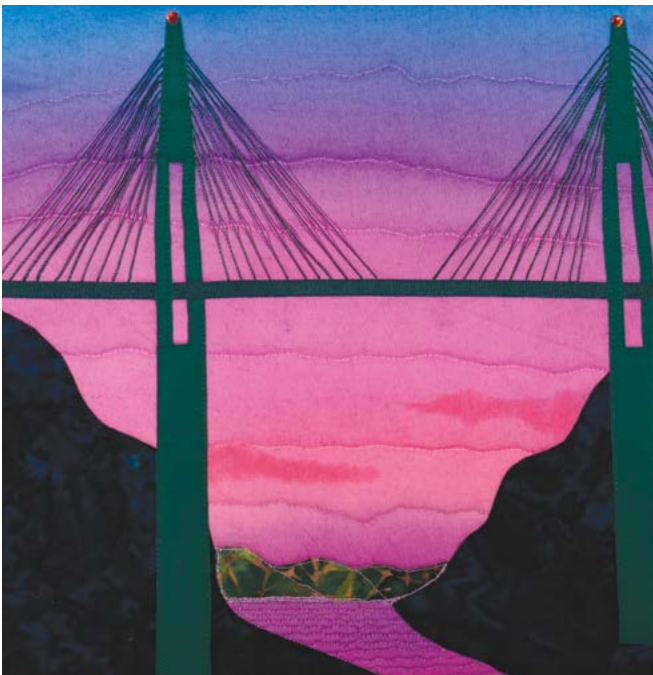
The Social Justice Sewing Academy presenters were (left to right): Sara Trail, Nancy Williams, Juan Tapia, Bryan Robinson, and Kate Godfrey.



View. Dream. Bid.



2019 SAQA BENEFIT AUCTION



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Sept. 13-Oct. 6 • Details: saqa.com/auction

Clockwise from upper left: Sonya Prchal, *Day's Over*; Alice Beasley, *The Race is On*; Frances Murphy, *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*; Margaret Abramshe, *Typewriter*; Thelma Newbury, *Millau Viaduct*; Kathy Angel Lee, *Sunday Drive*.

Letting go, reaching out

by Diane Howell



The last few weeks have been a roller coaster ride. Our little man, Dusty, was diagnosed with congestive heart failure. My main occupation has been living in a state of suspended animation as I wait for my precious dog's next pill time.

Why did this happen? We don't know. Did he eat a food suspected of being causally linked? Yes. How long will he be with us? Vets are of varying opinions. What are we doing? What the doctors tell us, although two pharmacy techs have expressed

awe at the level of blood pressure medicine he takes.

At some point, I had to start letting go of the fear of losing him. I had to look around and see what I could treasure in the here and now. Here is what I found:

First, I had to learn to look outward. The first thing that came from this realignment was a creative collaborator in the form of Patricia Gould, our Benefit Auction coordinator. She produced an article about our beloved auction. She wrote about the

30 quilts on exhibition at the International Quilt Museum that promote the event *and* help celebrate SAQA's 30th anniversary year. Museum visitors love the quilts! They find them an unexpected gem as they tour the venue's various exhibitions. Learn about a selection of works from that exhibition and all manner of facts and figures about the auction on page 22.

Second, I discovered the value of a good walk. I found it is okay to take a break and enjoy the company of my little man. We go the distance he is able, and I am free to relax and think happy thoughts. This activity is validated in this issue's *Art Talk* column by Jennie Johnston. Learn how walking can be a valuable part of your artistic practice and keep you healthy on page 18.

Third, I learned to let go. A commitment I couldn't meet was postponed. Normally, I would gear up into high stress for days or weeks over such a disappointment, but instead I looked at it as a blessing. I couldn't do the task and I needed my attention elsewhere. As I continued to pace

Ruth Powers

Don't Piss Off The Fairies

12 x 12 inches | 2008

This fairy is in a right little snit because I've separated her from her compatriots. It's for a good cause: to announce that Face Off, this issue's Member Gallery, is on page 26.



see Editor's Notes on page 35

Curvaceous 1

41.5 x 41.5 inches



Sylvia Gegaregian receives SAQA Award

Congratulations to Sylvia Gegaregian, recipient of the SAQA Award at Quilt National '19. Her work, *Curvaceous 1*, was selected by Quilt National jurors for being “compelling, dynamic, and progressive.”

Sylvia says her work was inspired when members of her quilting bee decided to try a new technique. “Since then, (that) small exploratory project has given me the courage to expand on my initial ideas and step out of my comfort zone.”

Curvaceous 1 includes many techniques: hand embroidery, painting, fused appliqué, and cut/slashed strips.

The SAQA Award is presented to one artist at three prestigious textile exhibitions: *Quilt National*, *Art Quilt Elements*, and *Quilt Visions*.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Georgia French

Q: What volunteer roles do you perform for SAQA?

A: This year I am co-chairing the Special Events Committee, which plans the SAQA Annual Conference. Our committee works with local SAQA members and SAQA staff to make each conference the best possible experience for attendees. I am also helping out in the SAQA/Oregon region with our first regional retreat.

Q: How do these roles enrich your SAQA membership?

A: Every committee or project allows me to get to know and work with new people, and I've made many friends who share my passion for supporting SAQA and its mission. I've learned (and am still learning) how SAQA works; it is so much more than the mere sum of its many parts. It's an amazing organization and so well-managed.

Q: How does volunteering reinforce your art practice?

A: Sometimes it has replaced my art practice, but when I do get back to the studio, I know there is much going on that wouldn't happen without all I have learned from SAQA. Right now I am seeing a larger window for my own creativity: Time is on my side at last and I'm enjoying making my art a priority instead of a leisure activity. I still have so much to learn, and so much to make!

Q: Tell us about your time with SAQA.

A: I have worked on prior SAQA/Oregon regional conferences and several of our regional exhibitions. I am co-chair of the seven-region exhibition *Shifting Tides*, which will travel through autumn 2021. Nationally, I was the first chair of the regional grant program and still sit on that committee. I began as a regional co-rep years ago when Oregon membership was less than 10



percent of what it is today. I am guessing that was around 2005. I had been a member for a long time before then, even though there was no opportunity for any local involvement.

My membership may have lapsed once or twice, but I always came back, because I knew then as I know now that art quilts are the visual art I most want to see, and supporting SAQA ensures I will have a lot to look at. The art enriches my life. The relationships enrich my life. And I am happy that I can contribute some administrative experience and support volunteer empowerment, which has always been a major interest.

Sue Reno

**Capturing
the light,
reflecting
nature**

by Cindy Grisdela



Heat Index

54 x 51 inches | 2018



Sue Reno has lived near the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania most of her life, and the river and its natural environment play outsized roles in her art.

Sue's technique of choice is cyanotype prints on fabric. Cyanotype is a photographic process that combines chemicals and sunlight to create blue prints of the artist's chosen images, either on photo paper or fabric, as in Reno's case. She uses both plant matter and digital images to create cyanotypes. Recently she has

experimented with "wet" cyanotype, which introduces "moisture and extreme exposure times into the procedure, with semi-predictable results. The cyanotype chemicals break down into a range of colors and patterns that make the prints really exciting and addictive to produce," she says. Reno adds patchwork to frame the imagery she creates and free motion quilts various motifs on her Bernina domestic sewing machine. She has a large collection of fabric, ranging from commercial



In Dreams I Drifted Away
60 x 45 inches | 2018

Heat Lightning
78 x 32 inches | 2018



cotton prints that date back to the 1940s to silks from a sojourn in India while a student.

Heat Index, from 2018, is a great example of Reno's process. She combined four blocks of botanical prints created with wet cyanotype and solar dye printing on a hot, humid August day with luminous silk patchwork. The result is a dynamic composition that evokes summer's heat, a lively mix of blue and white prints with red and green patchwork.

Reno also uses sun printing, free-form gelli plate printing, and

Thermofax printing. Simply put, she employs several methods to put imagery on fabric; she mixes and matches them as appropriate for the focus of the quilt.

Reno learned to sew at a young age. "I had a very traditional, practical Pennsylvania Dutch upbringing that included a full, informal schooling in life skills." Her first quilts were utilitarian, but her work evolved in a more artistic direction thanks to the early pioneers in the art quilt movement who opened her mind to the possibilities.

Rabbit and Maple
71 x 86 inches | 2018



Squirrel and Locust, detail, 2011

Reno's studio time varies with the seasons. In the summer, she does most of her printmaking with plants gathered from her garden or on hikes. Winters are for more indoor pursuits. She has a studio in a walkout basement of her home, where the sink, washer, and dryer are easily accessible. There are few frills. Fabric is stored in plastic bins, and bookcases of binders hold notes about each quilt. This simple setup allows Reno to focus on what she has on the design wall at any given time. Her most creative time is in the afternoon and evening hours, so she uses mornings for routine tasks.

When she begins a new piece, Reno assembles the prints and the patchwork in place, then blocks out

time to "really get into the flow of the design process without interruption." She doesn't normally sketch or create a formal plan. "I sincerely, on a deep level, hate measuring things." While she was trained as a traditional quiltermaker and understands precision sewing, improvisation fits better with her creative design process.

She usually works on two or three large quilts at a time. That way, if she runs into a stumbling block on one, she has something else to focus on as her subconscious mulls over a solution.

Not all of Reno's prints are made from plants. She also uses skulls of woodland animals that she finds on her hikes or ethically sources. *Rabbit and Maple*, 2018, uses a combination

of botanical prints and prints made from a rabbit skeleton. Reno also included some small embroidery panels in the composition, part of her *Flora and Fauna* series. Another quilt in that series, *Squirrel and Locust*, was included in SAQA's *Metamorphosis* exhibition. A detail of the piece shows one of the squirrel skull prints next to a leaf print with intricate beading separating the images and adding color and sparkle.

Another series focuses on buildings, primarily historic architecture in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. *Silk Mill #3*, 2013, was inspired by the former Ashley and Bailey mill in Columbia, Pennsylvania, and now is part of the permanent fine art collection of the State Museum of Pennsylvania in Harrisburg.

Yet another series was a yearlong project Reno tackled in 2017 called *52 Ways to Look at the River*. She visited different places along the Susquehanna River every week for a year and took photographs. Back in the studio she used the imagery to create a 9 x 12-inch needle-felted panel for each week. She assembled them into a quilt when all 52 were complete.

Reno's work documents the things that grow, the seasons, and the historic buildings in her corner of the world. "It's important to me that my work is beautiful; even when I'm portraying death or decay, the work ends up with a joyous aesthetic. I work intuitively so I'm not certain how that happens, but I'm glad it does," she says.

Reno took advantage of a unique opportunity in late 2016. She heard about a call for artists for an event at NASA's Goddard Space Center called the James Webb Space Telescope Artist Event and applied, even though she didn't have any space-themed



Silk Mill #3
53 x 60 inches | 2013



52 Ways to Look at the River
72 x 82 inches | 2017



***52 Ways to Look at the River*, detail**

artwork. Twenty-two artists in a variety of media were chosen, all creating art inspired by the telescope. *Luminosity*, was her result.

Reno began this piece by hand stitching gold hexagons on site in the telescope viewing room. There were no restrictions on the artwork created, which was “simultaneously liberating and slightly terrifying,” Reno says. The hexagons represent the mirrors of the telescope. She set her telescope representation on a beaded, needle-felted background to represent the cosmos, and bordered it with cyanotypes, solar dye prints, and digital prints made from the photos she took on site.

Exhibition is the primary focus of her work. She started out mainly applying to quilt shows, but as her work has evolved artistically, she has



Luminosity, detail



Luminosity
60 x 74 inches | 2017



Jack in the Pulpit

60 x 72 inches | 2014

Photo by Gregory Chase

been seeking acceptances at fine art and fine craft shows as well. She does her research and applies to exhibitions where she has a reasonable chance of acceptance and to some that seem more of a stretch. Even with research of the venue and the jurors, some acceptances are “just luck.” Good work, high-quality photos, and well-written artist statements can increase your “luck quotient,” Reno notes. She still gets her share of rejections where her work did not match the juror’s concept of an exhibition. “I never take rejection personally.”

Reno has a website and maintains a strong blog and social media presence where she shares her process and inspiration. “None of the techniques I use are proprietary, most yield very different results when wielded by different artists, and I enjoy using the internet for its highest and best purpose of advancing human knowledge.” She has

also appeared on *Quilting Arts TV* and writes magazine articles. All this drives requests for lectures and trunk shows to guilds and groups.

Because her work is large, sales are “sporadic but gratifying.” She creates some smaller work to sell at presentations and is looking into increasing her stock of those pieces and adding prints to her offerings.

It is a challenge to balance time for creative work with the demands of exhibiting, maintaining her blog, updating social media platforms, traveling, and honoring other responsibilities. “I prioritize making the work that’s important to me because that’s the foundation that holds up all the rest of it.”

Reno plans to keep her focus on creating. “I’m in the process of rearranging my life to free up more time to focus and work on making art. Being an artist lets me indulge my penchant for close observation of

natural phenomena, paired with the sheer glee involved in manipulating materials and creating something brand new to the world.”

You can see more of Reno’s work at suereno.com. ■

Cindy Grisdela is a SAQA JAM who resides in Reston, Virginia. You can explore her work at cindygrisdela.com.



Sue Reno in her studio.

Avoid studio pitfalls

Know the hazards, risks, and dangers of being a quilt artist

by Phyllis Cullen, MD

Experienced textile and quilt artists know the challenges presented by the chemicals, tools, and machines of our trade—mostly. They also know how to maintain a safe working environment—mostly. But our studios do hold their share of danger.

Let's divide our work hazards into two phases. The first phase is what we do to our fabrics. Chemical, mechanical, and heat treatments impact our fabrics and subject our bodies to the same processes.

The second phase is construction, which involves physical and mechanical issues that affect musculoskeletal, neurologic systems, and the like. Often referred to as ergonomic issues, these arise from tools and the way we use them.

Phase 1: Fabric treatment

Hazards include heat and burns, poor lighting and eye strain, and physical injuries from broken needles, sharp pins, and rotary cutters. These hazards are inherent in any sewing or quilting process. However, surface design and material manipulation increase the risk for injury. Inhalation or contact with dye powders, bleaches, photoreactive, and other chemicals, as well as toxic exposure via various paints, mediums, glues, and cleaning products, can cause extensive damage to the skin, mucous membranes, and lungs. The damage may be more serious when these toxins gain access to our nervous system,

cardiovascular system, gastrointestinal tract, and urinary tract. Localized damage from hot glue, bleach, heavy metals in paints, and solvents are some common problems.

Skin

The skin can be damaged by contact (dermatosis), and, along with the lungs, serve as an entry point for certain toxins that cause chemical destruction via percutaneous absorption, which occurs through unbroken skin.

Acute contact dermatitis can be caused by hundreds of irritating and sensitizing chemicals, plants, and photoreactive agents. More are being developed daily. Read every label. Even skin color change from non-heavy metal dye or paint is not harmless. Some damage is being done. Symptoms can include heat, swelling, redness, blistering, oozing, itching, burning, and general discomfort.

More long-term problems can occur due to a cumulative effect of repeated contact with weak or moderate irritants. These can end up as dry red plaques or chronic dermatitis with dry, thickened, cracked, and scaly skin, especially on hands.

We also see mechanical damage to the skin from friction, pressure, heat, cold, crushing, scratching, macerating, and other trauma. These can result in tenosynovitis (inflammation of tendons and soft tissues), myositis (muscle inflammation with swelling,

stiffness, soreness, etc.), bony injuries, nerve damage, and lacerations. Vibration-producing tools can cause finger spasms and permanent nerve damage and numbness.

Prevention is less painful than treatment! Even for quick processes, wear gloves—at least small plastic bags—when handling chemicals. Be careful with irons, heat guns, glue guns, or rotary cutters and other sharp objects. A needle guard on the sewing machine can prevent injury.

Lungs

The lungs and upper airways are sensitive to aerosolized chemicals, especially through liquids or powders that can damage the throat and cause asthma in the airways. Repeated or highly toxic exposure can permanently damage lungs. Some plastics require high heat for manipulation, which can release toxins. Aerosolized glues do what they are made for—inside your lungs! Many poisons are absorbed through the lungs which, as through skin absorption, can damage every organ in the body.

Even if you don't do surface design, fabrics may be treated with formaldehyde or other chemicals which cause sensitivity in susceptible individuals. If you buy bargain-priced, lower-quality fabrics of questionable origin, most experts advise that you wash it before you handle or breathe it. If you use a spray or powder, make sure to use proper respiratory protection.

If you don't know if a substance you are using is hazardous, find out or take universal precautions. Read the labels. Know the products, maintain proper ventilation, and use respiratory protection every time.

Eyes

Eye protection is critical when you work with chemicals, sharp objects, vibrating tools, etc. A lot of chemical burns, foreign bodies, and injuries are due to compressed air. Also problematic are effects of poor lighting, dirty air, and eye strain, which produce cumulative effects on vision. Eye dryness and age-related eye changes accelerate damage.

It allows us to notice possible hazards from chemicals, sharp implements, and heat sources.

Phase 2: Construction Phase

Hazards to the neuromuscular system occur most often during construction. It is common to have strains to muscles, joints, tendons, and ligaments from repetitive motions. Contorted positions of the hands, elbows, shoulders, neck, knees, and low back can lead to occupational cervicobrachial (neck and shoulder) disorders, cumulative trauma disorders, and overuse syndromes. Repetitive hand and wrist movements lead to arthritis at the base of the thumb (often the first location of arthritis), carpal tunnel syndrome (earliest sign may be numbness in your hands when you wake up), ganglion cysts, and forearm tendonitis.

Acute injuries often occur from crushing injuries, (dropping irons on our feet!) and entanglement in cords and wires.

Environment & workstation

In many studio environments, poorly designed workstations, tools, and equipment are the norm. Studios are cluttered with bags and boxes of materials. Liquids teeter precariously. Electrical issues include cords knocking over toxic chemicals, electrocution, and exposure to excessive heat.

Keep floors and passageways clean, clear, well lighted, and dry to minimize slips, trips, and falls. Electric-powered equipment should be certified flame-proof and should be grounded to prevent static electricity buildup.

Sitting and standing

When working at sewing machines, cutting tables, ironing boards, or desks, poor posture combined with highly repetitive work is prevalent. This is true even though major advances have been made in the design and production of ergonomic, well-lit stations for sewing, cutting, ironing, painting, and other tasks.

I see a lot of patients who don't use appropriate adjustable chairs. This leads to leaning forward and reversal of the curves of the upper and lower spine; that posture stresses the hip joints and lower back. You might develop problems with the low back and the lower extremities if your chair doesn't have a back rest, which minimizes hunching over. Sitting too long in an awkward position puts strain on the upper back and the shoulders, neck, and skull, causing cervical disc injuries and degeneration, spinal arthritis, muscular spasms, and stiffness.

Make sure your legs fit under a table or desk comfortably and that your feet are flat on the ground. A waterfall front—one with rounded

edges that curve downward—on your chair seat may put less stress on the backs of your thighs.

Sewing machine height should allow your elbows to be at about 90 degrees when you sew, with shoulders in a relaxed position. An adjustable chair can help you obtain this position. Another tip is to tilt your machine slightly forward. You can get a couple of rubber door stops to put under the back of the machine to protect your neck from being sharply bent; this will also protect your low back from strain. Having enough table space to the left of your sewing machine is important when you work with large or heavy projects. That setup supports the project's weight without straining your neck, back, and shoulders. Having a mat or non-stick surface below your foot pedal is also important. A sliding pedal may force you to extend or twist your knee, and lose your back curve.

Standing on hard floors for extended periods isn't good for your back. There are many good foam or rubberized mats (make sure they are nonslip!) that can be placed where you cut or iron.

Tools

Proper storage and placement of equipment and tools is key. Artists and craftspeople cut, sew, lift, press, and twist in awkward positions to retrieve items in cluttered environments.

Using heavy irons for extended periods can aggravate disorders of the wrist, shoulder, elbow, and forearm. You may develop related nerve entrapment disorders from pressing as well as repeatedly setting the iron

see Studio Safety on page 37

Selections from *Forced to Flee*

Throughout history people have been forced to flee from their homes for their own safety and survival due to war, oppression, natural disasters, and atrocious human rights violations. The refugee crisis has impacted the social, economic, and political structures of host countries, especially poor and developing countries.

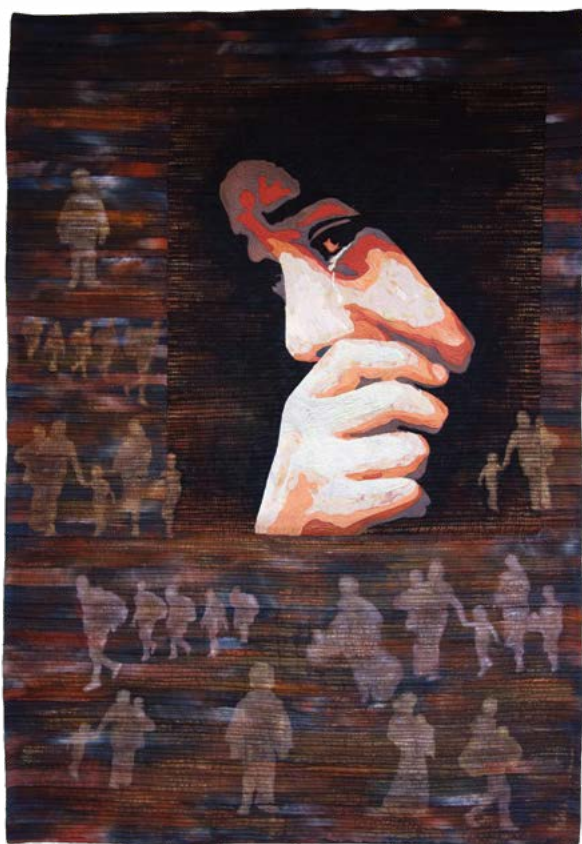
Forced to Flee was juried by Dr. Susan Beryl Marks, associate fellow of the International Quilt Museum in Lincoln, Nebraska. It premiered at the Ruth Funk Center for Textile Arts in Melbourne, Florida. It is now on exhibit at The Historical & Cultural Society of Clay County in Moorhead, Minnesota, where it will be through October. Visit saqa.com/forcedtoflee to view the video featuring Dr. Marks and the exhibition artists who attended the premiere. More details about the exhibition are available there too.



Sara Sharp

Fleeing from Drought

53 x 34 inches | 2015



Eunhee Lee

They Are Also Us

42.5 x 29 inches | 2018



Jim Hay

Refuge or Refuse: Offer Sanctuary or Discard as Trash

91 x 78 inches | 2018

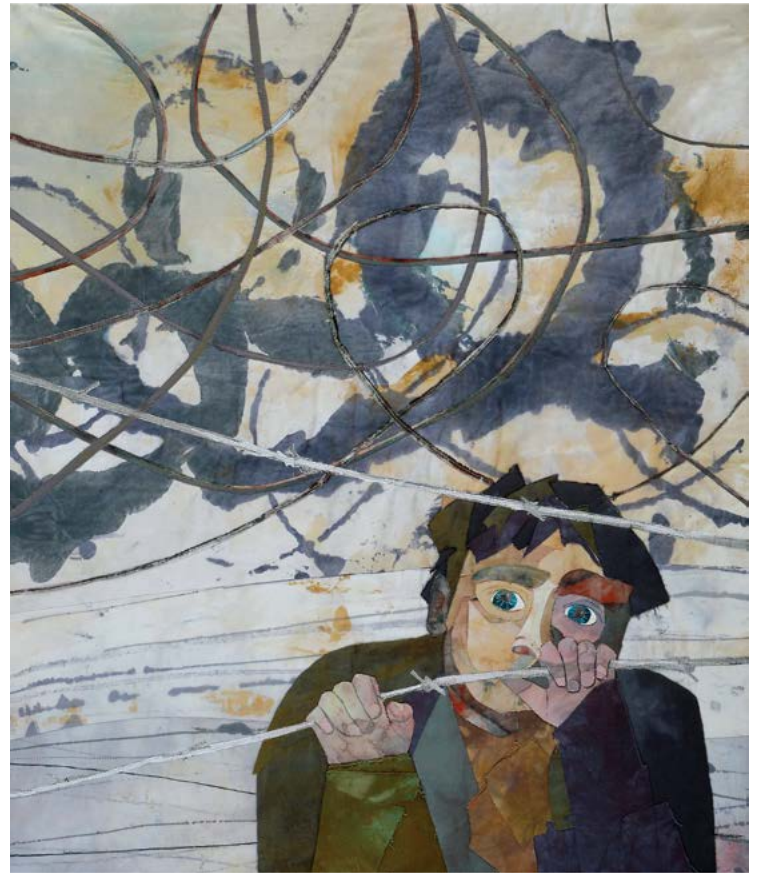


Diane E. Wespiser

Wanted—A Home

68 x 54 inches | 2018

Photo by Robert Wespiser

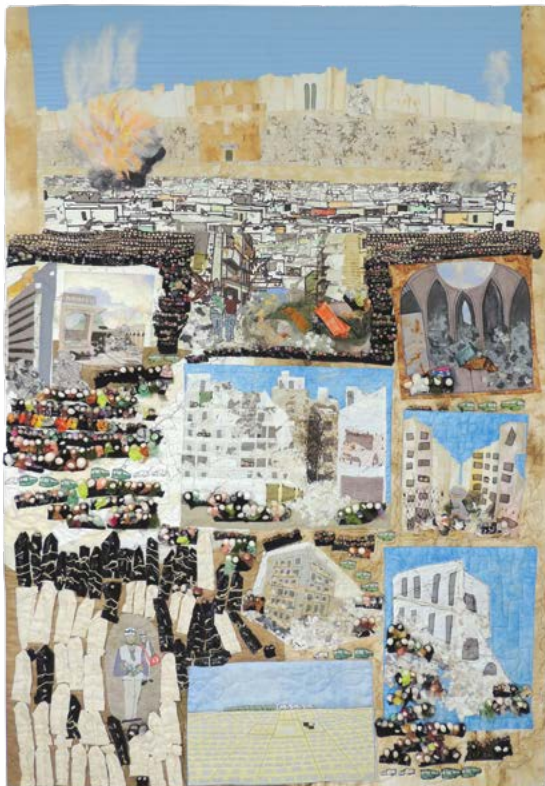


Jo Thomas

Child Behind Barbed Wire

36 x 27 inches | 2018

Inspiration photo by Zorah Miller



Anne Daughtry

Aleppo

55.5 x 38.5 inches | 2018



Catherine A. Drummond

Displaced

26.5 x 31 inches | 2018

Photo by Larry Goldstein

Walking creates healthy, creative avenues

by Jennie Johnston

What links Beethoven, Charles Dickens, and Georgia O'Keeffe?

They were habitual and devoted walkers. While we often discuss artistic tools, such as paint brushes, rotary cutters, or sewing machines, we can easily overlook the deeper reasons successful creative people maintain high levels of productivity. What are their secrets to success? What routines do they adhere to, and how do those routines inform their work? Let's consider how we can, and should, incorporate walking into our artistic tool box.

Physical health

The hum of the sewing machine fills our days and the intricacy of handwork requires stillness. Unfortunately, sitting for long periods is not good for our health. In *Born to Walk*:

SAQA/Michigan member Beth Markel puts it this way: "Being a quilter is often a sedentary thing, so walking gets my body moving in ways that really help with circulation. I swing my arms, sometimes like pendulums, sometimes bent and close to my body like I'm race walking, and sometimes it's leisurely when I hold hands with my husband."

Movement is a human act that our bodies need. Working a daily walk into your creative routine can provide the added benefit of a more fit body as it gets your blood pumping. While this may be a given to many, it is easy to let the simple act of a walk around the block drop from our schedules. Even adding in a 5- to 15-minute walk will increase your circulation, stretch out your muscles—especially if you have been holding one posi-

our thoughts," writes Rebecca Solnit in *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*.

Within our screen heavy modern world, we have more and more excuses to sit and look rather than experience things as our ancestors did. While some of us may try to walk while looking at our smart phones, our mental health does not thank us for this habit. When out walking, our brain has the chance to encounter new things and this helps us settle our minds, slow our breathing, and just be. The pace of our days can lead to anxiety and depression and being outside is a proven mood lifter. SAQA/Pennsylvania member Peggy Black says that walking "clears the mind and allows the focus to shift to meditation and reflection." This health benefit is one that any artist can utilize. After all, we are human beings first. Taking care of our mental and physical health is necessary to produce the work we love. Movement also decreases the risk of developing dementia and cognitive decline, according to multiple sources, including England's Walking for Health, which organizes a large network of network of health walks.

“We are human beings first. Taking care of our mental and physical health is necessary to produce the work we love.”

The Transformative Power of a Pedestrian Act by Dan Rubinstein, he lists the unequivocal benefits to our bodies that walking provides: "Walking builds bone mass, strengthens the muscles in your arms and legs, and gives your joints better range of motion. It enhances your balance, preventing falls, and eases back pain."

tion for too long—and revitalize your eyes and mind after the strain of making.

Mental health

"Walking allows us to be in our bodies and in the world without being made busy by them. It leaves us free to think without being wholly lost in

Creative inspiration

The wonderful places one can walk when seeking inspiration can also be a motivating factor. Artists who draw their primary ideas from nature need to get outside to feed their inspiration. Their interactions may take the form of walking with camera in hand,

sketching, or gathering plant materials for dyes and printing. Markel fills her mind with possible new creations as she walks. She finds that “walking informs my creativity (by) seeing things more clearly.” Her description of a recent walk brings that statement to life: “The blue of the sky next to the brown of the winter tree limbs suddenly inspired me. The crunch of the snow under my feet made me think of new ways to sew angles into my work attempting to create that crunchy dynamic. The first robin of spring moved me to pull reds from my fabric stash and even purchase new red fabric when I was out shopping. Walking informs my creativity in countless positive ways, from attitude to inspiration.” City walks can also prove invaluable when artists see architecture, storm drain covers, or walkway railings. Angles, textures, or light shining onto glass buildings collectively prove there is no end to the new work that daily walks can spark.

Unblock creative channels

Creative block is the dread of most creative people, but it happens to us all. Things can be humming along smoothly one minute and in the next everything shuts down. What do artists who walk do in that moment? They get moving.

Regina Marzlin, a SAQA/Atlantic Canada member, says walking helps her conquer creative blocks. “Looking at a faraway space broadens my view, literally, and instead of staring at fabric from a close distance I take in the bigger picture and free my mind from the restrictions of the small studio room I work in.” Author Julia Cameron, who wrote *Walking in this World: The Practical Art of Creativity*, says walking is where “difficult clarity emerges.” So, if a technique

is not working, or if you cannot decide between two fabrics for your foreground, put down the work and let your body wander through your neighborhood for a few minutes. This physical act may give you clarity on the issue you are struggling with. Of course, ideas may emerge later, but walking can be much more calming and beneficial than panicking in your studio and becoming more frustrated.

Walk every day

Forming a new habit is a challenging feat. If we are used to the steady daily rhythm of coffee, newspaper, and then sewing, it may seem almost impossible to insert a 10-minute walk around the block into our morning. Many of us also struggle with outside constraints such as children or elderly parents to care for, jobs that start early or finish late, and the reality of cold, ice-covered walkways or extreme high temperatures. If you are not a morning person, consider mid- to late-afternoon walks. This will help with the afternoon slump many of us experience, boost your energy levels, and hopefully give you a second wind. If outdoor temperatures are soaring, early morning or evening walks are a good idea. Many people walk in the mall to avoid extreme temperatures. If the pavement is uneven in your neighborhood and you are worried about injuries or falls, look for a walking or running track in your town, or consider walking with a friend or family member. A walking buddy can be a good way to keep yourself accountable and allow you to socialize during your day.

If walking proves a challenge for other reasons, the key is to start small and gradually increase your time. Five minutes is better than nothing, and as you build up your stamina, you



Learn more about walking's health and creative benefits through the following resources:

Books

- *Walking in the World: The Practical Art of Creativity* by Julia Cameron
- *Born to Walk: The Transformative Power of a Pedestrian Act* by Dan Rubenstein
- *Daily Rituals: How Artists Work* by Mason Currey
- *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* by Rebecca Solnit

Websites

- walkingforhealth.org.uk
- everybodywalk.wpengine.com
- healthline.com/health-news/walking-indoors-outdoors-increases-creativity-042814#1
- realsimple.com/health/fitness-exercise/how-to-walk/

will notice how movement is making a positive change in your health and creativity. “How you walk matters less than that you walk,” champions author Cameron in her *Walking in this World* book.

So look at walking as your newest creative tool. It may bring you fabulous results! ■

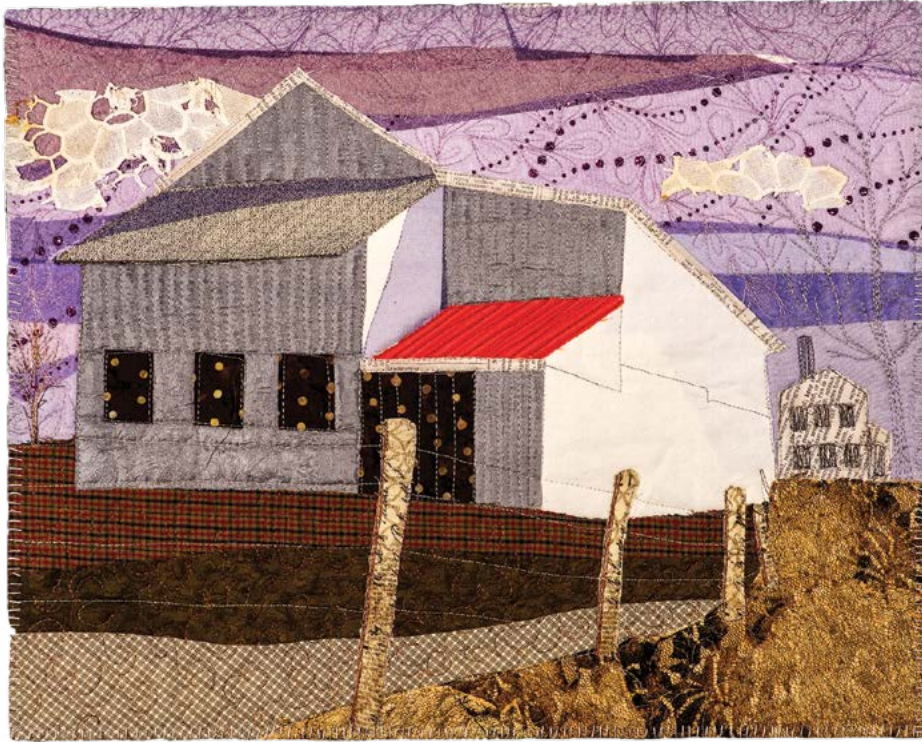
Jennie Johnston resides in British Columbia and is co-rep for the SAQA/Western Canada region. She has shown her work in venues throughout North America. She blogs and shares her mixed-media art quilts at jenniejohnston.com

Martha Ressler

Purple Sky, Red Roof

16 x 20 inches | 2018

Photo by Jay Ressler



Marjan Kluepfel

A Year in the Forest

40 x 66 inches | 2016

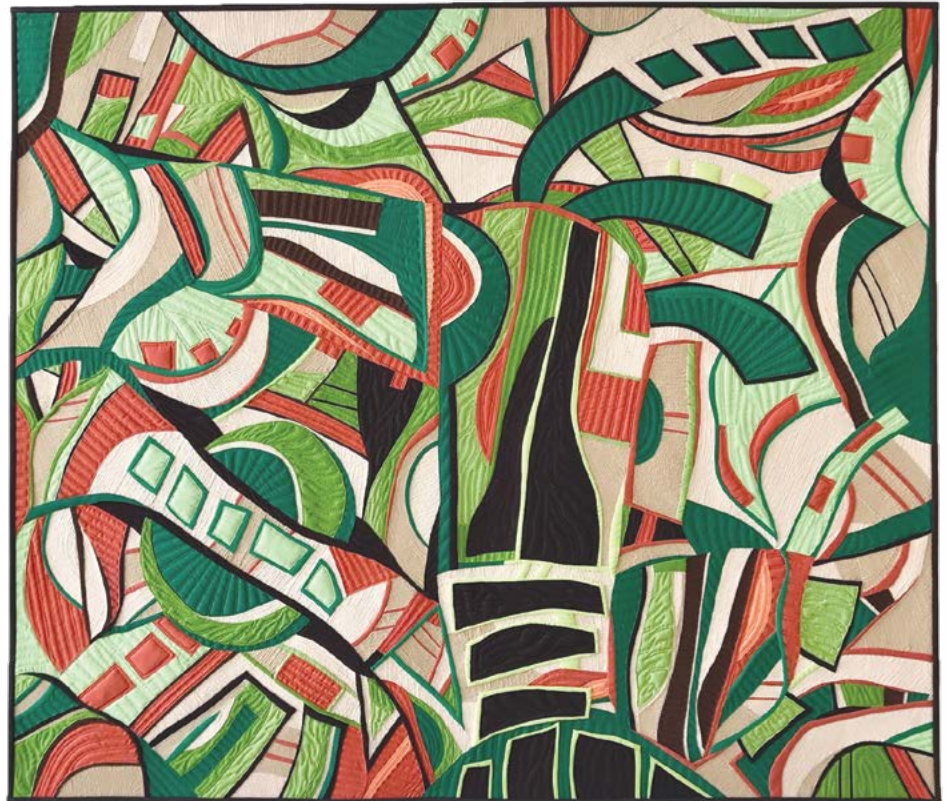




Barbara Lange

Urban Bugs

27 x 66 inches | 2018



Sheila Frampton Cooper

Ruins of Roussillon

28 x 33 inches | 2017

Grace Harbin Weaver, Ph.D.

And the Sky Rolled Up Like a Scroll

66 x 40 inches | 2018

Photo by Jeff White Photography



Benefit Auction offers ‘wonderful’ mix of quilts

by Patricia Gould

SAQA's Benefit Auction celebrates our 30th anniversary with a special exhibition of 30 auction quilts at the International Quilt Museum (IQM) in Lincoln, Nebraska. These quilts were on display at the museum through August 4.

The quilts proved to be a popular point of interest at IQM. "We have had a great response to the SAQA 30th Anniversary exhibition. Our viewers have really enjoyed the wide-ranging topics and techniques. I think the art quilts always intrigue visitors, as they are not as familiar with the (medium)," says Carolyn Ducey, IQM's curator of collections. "I hear things like, 'Wow, I didn't know people made quilts like that!' or comments on the fun imagery. People have spent a lot of time perusing each of the pieces closely and marveling at the artistry."

I completely understand the delight the 2019 auction quilts bring to IQM's visitors. The great advantage to being the Benefit Auction coordinator is that I get to see all of the quilts as they come in. And this year, they are wonderful. The pieces convey heartfelt messages often expressed through the innovative use of materials.

I've reviewed a few pieces from those I selected for the 30th Anniversary exhibition to give you a glimpse of what awaits bidders during the three-week auction from September 13 through October 6.

Animal kingdom

In addition to being an artist and an adventurer, I am an animal lover. So it is no wonder that four of my favorite artworks beautifully depict animals and their connection to us and their environment.



From left to right: Jane Haworth, *Otis 1*; Sue Sherman, *Thoughtful Penguin*; Susan Smith, *Those Eyes*; and Mary Ann Van Soest, *Spring*.

Jane Haworth's piece, *Otis 1*, is a great example of how the artist's loose approach works so well. This funny, and perhaps lazy, dog's personality is captured in raw-edge appliqué and free-motion stitching, which build texture and furry details.

Sue Sherman's *Thoughtful Penguin* is a majestic portrait of a Magellanic penguin. I was fortunate to spend time in the Falkland Islands and on the Antarctic Peninsula in 2002, where I fell in love with all the penguin species that we encountered. Since they have no predators other than leopard seals and skuas (a bird that preys on the penguin chicks and eggs), we could sit on the ice and penguins would come right up to us without fear. Sherman's portrait captures that inquisitive nature of the species while her painting and stitching depict the unique feather patterns and handsome face of this beautiful bird.

Susan Smith's *Those Eyes* brings back wonderful memories of my three-week trip to Tanzania and Kenya. We camped in a small tent and were greeted only by wild animals, such as zebras and lions, who breathed on our tent at night. Smith's zebra's eyes are enchanting and engaging. You feel as though you are looking into his soul and conversing with him. Smith splits the portrait into two distinct

Benefit Auction by the numbers

What does it take to launch the SAQA Benefit Auction? *Lots* of effort by *lots* of dedicated people.

An analysis of this year's auction quilts yields impressive data. A total of 443 quilts were donated, a tie with 2018's record-breaking sum. Each quilt is made by a different artist. Of the 443 contributing artists, 23 percent live outside the United States, which closely aligns with our overall membership makeup.

New contributors also totaled 23 percent. There is a strong chance the newcomers will continue to be a part of the event, based on the fact that 40 percent of 2019's artists have donated a piece for five or more years. Those who have donated for 10 years or more make up 10 percent of the total donors.

We want to give a special nod to the ten artists who have made a piece for all thirteen auctions: Linda Colsh, Judith Content, Bodil Gardner, Monique Gilbert, Denise Oyama Miller, Alison Muir, Wen Redmond, Susan Shie, Lynn Welsch, and Diane Wright.

Again this year we held a regional challenge, with regions split into large and small categories. A rundown of quilts by region shows that SAQA/Oceania contributed the most quilts in the large region category; second was Southern California/Southern Nevada, with Oregon a close third. In the small region category, SAQA/Alaska was the winner, followed by Nebraska and Arkansas/Louisiana. Each winning region received \$250 to support its activities.



Penni Barger, *The Artist Within*

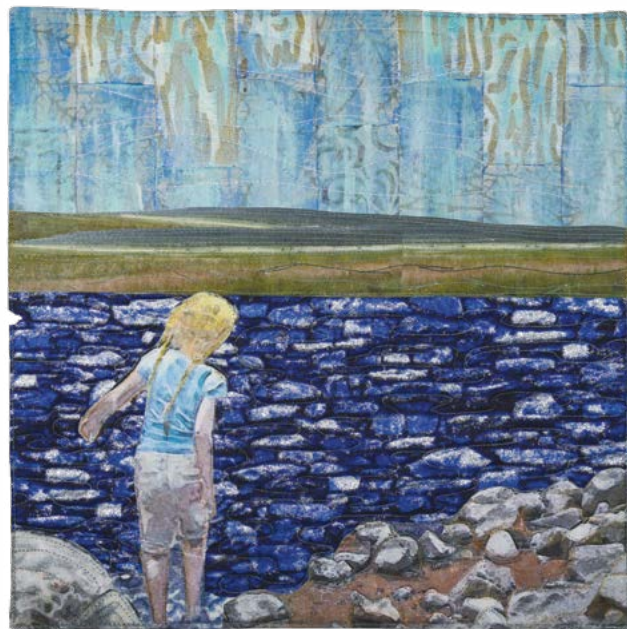
parts, each with its own color and fabric treatments, to make the piece all the more eye-catching.

Spring, by Mary Ann Van Soest, seems like a simple design at first, but her collage of written elements and a sketchbook appearance add depth beyond a mere portrait of a bird. I especially like that she has cropped off the feathers at the edges so that it looks like a page from a sketchbook rather than a formal composition.

All the people

Penni Barger's *The Artist Within* highlights her passion for and expertise at painting. This still life is reminiscent of Vermeer's paintings with lovely highlights and subtlety of color and shadows. Only after careful examination do we see the reflection of a painter, perhaps Barger herself, working at her easel.

I love the energy of the child and the rocky beach in *Wading by the Rocks* by Christine Predd. You can sense the excitement this little girl is feeling as she enters the water, definitely the way I felt as a child collecting rocks, shells, and beach glass on the Atlantic Ocean.



Christine Predd, *Wading by the Rocks*



Maria Stoller, *Stuart*

Stuart, by Maria Stoller, is an engaging portrait of a man that is open to interpretation on many levels. He's not looking at us or even beyond us. What exactly is he looking at? I love the ammonites that comprise the backdrop for this portrait. They almost make you believe he is underwater—or maybe he views himself as a fossil. He's a fascinating conundrum.

Our world

Two artworks in this anniversary collection address environmental issues with very different



Lisa Jenni, *Rings of Eternity II*



Pixeladies, *Watercolor Pencils 5: Let's Talk About Water*

approaches. Lisa Jenni's abstract collage, *Rings of Eternity II*, includes plastic rings and netting that can be found on beaches, in rivers and lakes, and in massive piles in all the world's oceans. This is a very strong statement that these pieces of plastic will be around when we are long gone and are a serious threat to the health of our planet.

Deb Cashatt and Kris Sazaki have collaborated for years as Pixeladies. Their dynamic piece, *Watercolor Pencils 5: Let's Talk About Water*, highlights the crises we face with water shortages and the polluting of

water by human activity. The use of watercolor pencils as their backdrop for newspaper clippings and other references to water is a bold composition, one that attracts attention and opens dialogs about serious threats to a critical element of life on Earth.

As you can see, the work in the 30th Anniversary exhibition proudly represents SAQA and the art quilt medium. Enjoy an online view of all 443 pieces donated by SAQA members at saqa.com/auction. Make a list of your favorites and bid in our popular fundraising event September 13-October 6. ■

How the auction works

Our 2019 Benefit Auction begins with Diamond Day, an opportunity to make any auction quilt yours for \$1,000. This top-tier bidding starts at 2 p.m. ET on Friday, September 13.

Then, from September 16-October 6, the 12 x 12-inch auction quilts will be available

in three sections. A new section opens each Monday at a bid price of \$750. The price is reduced daily until it reaches \$100 on Saturday. The first bid on a piece wins. At week's end, any remaining quilts in that section move to the SAQA Store, where they will be for sale at \$100 apiece.

Remaining quilts also will be in the SAQA booth at International Quilt Festival/Houston Oct. 31-Nov. 3. If any remain after that event, they will make one last appearance in the SAQA Store through December 20.

For full details, visit saqa.com/auction.

SAQA 2019 Benefit Auction Pricing Schedule

	\$750	\$550	\$350	\$250	\$150	\$100
Section 1	Sept 16	Sept 17	Sept 18	Sept 19	Sept 20	Sept 21
Section 2	Sept 23	Sept 24	Sept 25	Sept 26	Sept 27	Sept 28
Section 3	Sept 30	Oct 1	Oct 2	Oct 3	Oct 4	Oct 5

Every quilt is available as a Buy It Now purchase of \$1,000 for the duration of the auction, even if the section is not yet open for bidding. Prices change at 2 p.m. ET. No bids will be accepted between 1:45-2 p.m. ET while system updates are being made.

Face Off



Jeanelle McCall

I'm Listening Still

13 x 13.5 inches | 2018



Denise Oyama Miller

Eunice

31 x 17 inches | 2010



Tiziana Tateo

Inside and Outside

42 x 63 inches | 2012



Mary Pal

Willie

45 x 34 inches | 2018



Claire Passmore
Do You See What I See?
 46.5 x 71 inches | 2018

Barbara Schneider
Beautiful Faces, var. 1
 16 x 20 inches | 2016



Sarah Ann Smith
Cookie? PLEEEZE COOKIE!
 22 x 17 inches | 2009



Peggy Blei Hracho
Small Talk
 4 x 6 inches | 2018

Threads of Innovation

2019 SAQA Annual Conference Wrapup

Threads of Innovation charged with creative energy

by Diane Howell

The creative energy flowed freely at SAQA's 2019 annual conference April 25-28 at the San Jose (California) Hilton.

"I am not sure how you could market the creative energy and joy on steroids that is a SAQA conference," stated one new attendee in her post-conference survey. That palpable

creative spark is present at every conference, with each conference shaped by the unique resources and strong talent found in each locale. In San Jose, conference attendees benefitted from a tip of the hat to Silicon Valley and strong regional speakers, including Patricia "Pokey" Bolton and fine artist and illustrator Lisa Congdon.

The conference kicked off with the Thursday evening ice breaker. Members at each table brainstormed about one topic, such as creative rituals or innovative tools. Mel Beach compiled notes from all 18 table topics into one document to share.

The next morning, Patricia "Pokey" Bolton gave the opening keynote address. Her main message was that you can succeed by doing what you love. She traced her professional journey from founding Quilting Arts LLC, which published *Quilting Arts* and other magazine titles (the firm was sold, first to Interweave and then to F+W Publications), to her current venture, *Crafting a Life*, based in

Napa, California. Her new company produces the Craft Napa art retreat and publishes select projects.

Bolton was followed by artist Lisa Congdon, who presented an up-to-date program on how to use Instagram in your artistic practice. Because it is the largest visually driven social network, it is a natural home for visual artists. Some of Congdon's points were:

- The Instagram algorithm decides what you see, which makes engagement important; engagement includes likes, shares, and reposts.
- Recent posts are favored over older ones.
- Introduce yourself periodically to help new followers.
- Be responsive to comments and direct messages.
- Engage with and support others who do similar work.
- Post consistently, but not more than once or twice a day.



All photos by Maggie Vanderweit

Top: Gerrie and Lisa Congdon shared a quick break during the plenary sessions.

Bottom: Georgia French hands out registration info to Susan Else.

SAQA thanks the sponsors who helped make Threads of Innovation a success.

Our corporate sponsors were:

Platinum Sponsor
Innova

Silver Sponsors
Attached Inc. / Mistyfuse
C&T Publishing

Bronze Sponsors

Alegre Retreat

Aurifil

eQuilter.com

The Quilt Show.com

Turtle Hand

We also thank the volunteers and attendees who energized this conference with their creative spirit and support.

- Consider following a schedule, such as Inspiration Monday, etc.

Breakout sessions

Breakout sessions were also part of Friday's schedule. Photographer James Dewrance discussed fine art photography and SAQA member Katie Fowler led a creativity exercise. Two more SAQA members, Valerie Goodwin and Susie Monday, detailed their experiences with laser cutting and computer design.

Goodwin has created many intricate designs through use of a high-tech laser cutter; she has recently mastered similar techniques on the Cameo Silhouette. Noted for her ability to transform real places into abstract representations, the laser cutting adds new depth to her work. She notes that where art and technology overlap, magic happens. She brought some of her finished work to share with attendees, as well as a box of laser-cut materials to examine. Goodwin will teach workshops using the Cameo machine beginning in summer 2020. (You can read about her use of laser cutting in *SAQA Journal* Vol. 26, No. 1)

Monday gave an excellent introduction to digital design. Her practical advice is to focus on your artistic voice to navigate and choose among the many available apps. "Make it your own by spending time and knowing what you want to say." She teaches an online course in digital design twice year.

Finding a way

On Saturday, attendees learned about a successful collaboration: RoCoCo. Formed in 2015 by KC Rosenberg and Modesto Covarrubias, their work most often takes form through sculptural installations, but has included video, performance, drawing, painting, and audience participation.

Saturday also brought a moving presentation by the Social Justice Sewing Academy. Founded by Sara Trail, it is an innovative, intergenerational initiative that produces intensely moving work (see sidebar).

Pleasant walking tours of art exhibitions and spaces in downtown San Jose—including SAQA's *H20h!* exhibition at the San Jose Quilt & Textile Museum and the regional exhibition *Shifting Tides: Convergence in Cloth* at



Top: Diane Nunez, Valerie Goodwin, Judith Trager, and Nancy Turbitt enjoy networking time.

Bottom: Lisa Jenni tried on some wings during our downtown art tour.

Lightning Talks

This series of short presentations became a conference favorite when it debuted at the 2016 Philadelphia conference. The talks bridge longer plenary sessions and offer insight into studio practices.

Jane Haworth presented her approach to meeting one-of-kind requests for memory quilts. **Elisabeth Nacenta de la Croix's** presentation (read by Maria Shell), explained how memory guides her to add shapes for a more personal piece.

Candice Phelan spoke about using a longarm to appliqué, piece, thread paint, and more. She moderates a new SAQA

Special Interest Group, Art Quilt Design on a Longarm.

Kathy Suprenant gave a tour of her series, *What did Ming Miss?* It highlights events in the lifespan of a 500-year-old, deep-sea clam that was dredged up by scientists off the coast of Iceland in 2006.

A fascinating compare-and-contrast lesson was given by sisters **Jean Renli Jurgenson** and **Aileyn Renli Ecob**. One makes quilts based on architecture, the other on nature. Side by side, their works are full of depth and wonder.

Linda Gass brought her *Living Shoreline*

project to life. It started as a temporary installation to mark the original shoreline at Cooley Landing in East Palo Alto. It became a living land installation; the California native plant *Juncus patens* now marks the location.

Cindy Parry advised how to boost creativity by devoting one day a week to studio time: be consistent, don't answer the phone or read email, and turn down everything else.

Sandra Bruce encouraged attendees to overcome fears. "What you need to know about your next piece is in your last piece," she said. "Do whatever scares you; you'll overcome it."

Works/San Jose—led up to Saturday night's banquet.

A feature of every banquet is the Spotlight Auction, which features small 6 x 8-inch works donated by members. Conference attendees eagerly anticipate owning these tiny works. The event raised more than \$17,000 for our exhibition and other programs.

A final bow

Closing out the conference on Sunday were two more dynamic presentations. The first was a panel discussion with Martha Sielman, Sandra Sider, Lisa Ellis, and Nancy Bavor, the authors of *Art Quilts Unfolding: 50 Years of Innovation*. They talked about the decisions made to create this comprehensive history of the art quilt movement. Everything from the timeline to who would serve as editor had to be worked out. There was also the tedious process to find good photographs and obtain permission to use them. That step revealed an important lesson for today's artists: maintain high-quality and up-to-date photography. The book, published by Schiffer Publishing, is a labor of love as the authors donated all proceeds to SAQA. It is available at saqa.com/aqu.

The final keynote presentation was by Joan Schulze, who presented a reflective overview of her artistic journey. Schulze has always used innovation in her work, such as image transfer, and writes poetry. Her advice included to consider everything an experience. Schulze's was a contemplative ending to a conference full of ideas, networking, energy, and innovation

Join us March 19-22, 2020, in Toronto for moSAiQA, our first conference outside the United States. Registration opens in September at saqa.com/conference. ■

Bryan Robinson
Blood, White and Blue
2018 SJSA Summer Institute
60 x 45 inches

Social Justice Sewing Academy

Group creates 'artists' to foster change

The Social Justice Sewing Academy (SJSA) brings together young people, ideas, and art—a winning combination that yields 'artists.'

Founded in 2017, the California-based organization empowers young people to express themselves in textile art. SJSA made a lasting impression on SAQA members who attended the 2019 Threads of Innovation conference. On the dais for the group's panel presentation were founder Sara Trail, two young artists, quilter Nancy Williams, and SJSA's publication director Kate Godfrey.

The art created by artists such as Bryan Robinson and co-panelist Juan Tapia creates opportunities for growth and social justice. Through a series of hands-on workshops in schools, prisons, and community centers, SJSA artists create art that explores issues of gender discrimination, mass incarceration, gun violence, and gentrification.

To help complete the artists' designs, quilt blocks are shipped to volunteers around the world to embroider and embellish. Finished quilts are displayed in museums, galleries, and major quilt shows across the country. This visual dialogue bridges differences in race, age, and socioeconomics to ignite a social revolution for change.

SAQA members found Robinson's quilt particularly moving. Godfrey painted red dye on the vertical stripes, adding to its starkness. Robinson represented himself with the figure wearing a graduation cap, emphasizing how hard it is to overcome prejudice.

To continue this work, Trail says they want to build their organization through human and financial resources. Volunteers are needed for marketing, grant writing, fundraising,



exhibition operations, donor relations, bookkeeping, workshop facilitation, and partnerships. "If you have special skill sets such as nonprofit compliance, or know how to price for and partner with museums, we'd love to learn from you."

One near-term goal is creation of a revenue strategy that will allow SJSA to be self-sustaining. The group is raising approximately \$10,000 to build and enact this plan.

Startup capital also is critical. Initial funds will go toward professional curriculum design in several different formats. A train-the-trainer program is needed to prepare the volunteers around the country to work with youth in their own communities. The addition of an adult corporate curriculum will generate significantly more revenue per workshop, offsetting what schools are able to afford for SJSA programs.

Sponsorships of all types are another cornerstone. "A shipping sponsor would make a huge difference for SJSA as our business model relies on quilt blocks traveling around the world," Trail says. Finished quilts are heavy and expensive to ship to quilt shows and museums, "but our impact comes from getting exposure for youth artists' work and the meaningful conversations sparked amongst those who see it."

In the San Francisco Bay Area, volunteers are needed to piece quilts together in SJSA's sewing studio. Longarm volunteers are needed to help finish the quilts.

To help SJSA, or to sponsor a workshop in your area, contact the organization at info@sjacademy.com.

Wing your way to success

Tips for international traveling teachers

by Lyric Montgomery Kinard

The opportunity to explore the world was a top reason I became a traveling textile teacher. It took about ten years to build name recognition and make the right connections, but meeting quilters around the world is one of the best parts of the best job ever!

It's also complicated. You will deal with laws, currency, customs, and languages that might be unfamiliar. There will be things you don't expect and questions that you don't even know to ask. My advice is to be professional. The same processes apply abroad as they do for a domestic workshop booking, but with a few added complications.

Your most important asset is a contact where you will teach. Try to find someone who knows the teaching trade, preferably one who has taught in your home country so that they can compare and contrast experiences. You should also reach out to teachers in your home country who have recently taught in your destination. Ask how travel to your destination works and what adjustments were needed in classes.

Here is a rundown of things to do before you go:

Contracts and Payment

Whether you use the hiring group's contract or yours, it is more important than ever to have everything spelled out in advance. Include all of the usual information noted in previous articles (*SAQA Journal* Volume 28, No. 4, and Volume 29, Issue 1), but pay close attention to several fine

points. Decide how much you will charge and what currency you will be paid in; make sure you understand exchange rates. It is a good idea to spell out in writing the amount in both currencies: "Teacher will be paid (x)USD/(x)EU to be directly deposited into (X) account via wire transfer."

How will you be paid? You can use cash for spending money if you stay past your workshop dates, but you will need to exchange leftover cash. Airport exchange fees take a good percentage of that cash, as will your bank at home. If you are paid by check in a foreign currency, find out how your financial institution processes international checks. My credit union once took almost six months to deposit my payment. I find the easiest payment method is a direct wire transfer into my account.

Spell out your daily food per-diem or which meals will be paid for. What is your budget for airfare? What ground transportation will be provided and paid for? Exactly how many nights of lodging will be provided?

Language

Will you need a translator? Does your translator understand quilting lingo? It pays to learn as much of the language as you can before you go. At a minimum, learn the necessities: hello, thank you, how much, and where is the toilet?

Visa

This can be one of the most difficult bits to nail down. Your organizer is most likely not an expert in

international law and neither are you. Read the host country's immigration website carefully and talk to as many teachers as you can who recently travelled to your destination. If you need a work visa, apply well in advance. There is nothing more nerve-racking than waiting for a last minute visa.

Medicines

If you take regular medications, bring them in your carry on. Use an abundance of caution; have your doctor write a note listing your medications and supplements and stating they are all being taken under her supervision. It is a good idea to ask what immunizations are recommended and schedule those in plenty of time. You don't want to discover an adverse reaction to a shot while you are on the plane or risk getting an illness.

It's a good bet that at some point your gut will be unhappy one way or another. Bring medications with you to help either way.

Packing

Research the weather. A local's description of blistering heat might be your idea of a spring breeze. Bring layers. On my last international trip, the weather conditions went from winter chill to hot summer all in one day, and a lightweight rain jacket was the most useful thing in my suitcase.

Wear shoes you can walk in, and bring a fancy pair for your lecture if you must. Find out whether locals dress casually or wear nice clothes most of the time.

Flights

I prefer making my own reservations. I recommend using a travel agent for international bookings. She/he can handle what might be complicated schedules, especially if a partner will meet you mid-journey, and the agent can get a better price than you or your organizers.

Ground Transport

Make sure you clearly understand how ground transportation will be handled. You will probably be exhausted and disoriented when you land. You will need to navigate customs screenings. It's sometimes difficult to get out of a huge international airport that is also a bus, train, and subway hub, with signs you can't read. Will you need to make your own way to the venue? If you arrive in the middle of the night, will there even be transport available to your destination? Will public transport require advance tickets or can you pay onboard? Do they accept onboard payments or must you buy a ticket ahead of time? Will the ticket station be open when you arrive? I recommend requesting a local to meet you at the airport.

Don't assume that the hiring group will provide transport for you from your lodging to your classroom. Remember, you might be hauling a hundred pounds of luggage. Are there elevators? How far will you be walking? Are the streets cobbled? Will your driver or public transport be able to accommodate your luggage? Go through as many details as possible ahead of time with your organizer.

Safety

Research conditions in your host country but don't get paranoid. You will likely be with locals who know how to navigate the environment. Carry a money belt or a purse that is relatively pickpocket-proof. Make copies of the front and back of your

passport and all your cards; keep the copies in a different bag than the originals. Leave another copy sealed in an envelope with a family member or friend at home that you can call in an emergency. Upload them to the cloud (encrypted) so you can access them from a local computer.

Travel Insurance

Get it. International travel is expensive for you and your hosts. Insurance can cover delayed luggage, emergency, or delayed departures as well as illnesses and accidents. Talk to your travel agent or homeowner's insurance to find your best coverage. Things do happen. Luggage might never make it to a destination. A family emergency may require a quick flight home. Make a copy of the policy and all of your other contact info and upload that to the cloud as well.

Money

Get some cash in the currency before you go, especially if you are arriving in the middle of the night and aren't being met by a local. There is no guarantee that ATM machines will be available and working.

Teaching

Make sure you go through every detail of your teaching schedule with your organizer and with experienced teachers before you leave.

Supplies might be the stickiest issue. If students cannot find specific items, they can't continue your lessons later. You may or may not be able to ship or bring items in your luggage. Adjust accordingly. If you can work with a local shop owner, that's the best scenario for you and it creates a win for your students. Pay close attention to what materials each country prohibits. I found out at the last minute that I could not bring wood products into New Zealand, and I scrambled to find plastic

handled craft brushes for my surface design class.

I was unprepared for tea breaks when I taught in New Zealand. I am used to cramming as much information as possible into my six hours, but my students much preferred a more relaxed pace.

If you work with a translator everything will take twice as long; adjust your class syllabus accordingly.

If you work with electronics such as a projector in the classroom, understand the differences between electrical systems. I brought both a power converter and a plug adapter, having been told the former was necessary for my projector. I'm glad I had both because the converter didn't work and the adapter did. Your projector will be different than mine, so simply be prepared. Bring extra adapters and cords.

For my lectures I brought my iPad and three USB sticks, each stored in a different bag. The USB had the lecture stored in Keynote and PowerPoint formats, as well as numbered photos. I used all three on my most recent tour.

Once you arrive, more details will be in play:

Jet Lag

How many travel hours will you use to get to your destination? Will you get off the plane and need to go straight to a welcome dinner and lecture? Will you need an extra day or two to adjust your internal clock and catch up on sleep? Who will pay for extra days of food and lodging?

Lodging

There might be no elevator in your hotel and even toilet customs might be different from yours. Is tipping customary? How does heating and air conditioning work? I spent two nights freezing in an unheated room before I realized there were wonderful electric heating pads on the bed. Don't be too

embarrassed to ask about things you can't figure out.

Food

I'm an adventurous eater and absolutely love trying new food. You might not be. You might need to bring something familiar to snack on just in case, but beware. Many countries don't allow food of any kind through customs.

If you have food allergies make sure your hosts are clear on what that means. Are they life-threatening or are you flexible? You decide whether this teaching gig is a time to take a reasonable risk or be extra cautious. Do some research on the local cuisine so that you will have an idea ahead of time what will work and what to avoid.

Sleep

You might be a person who can sleep on a long overseas flight. Your

lodging might be in a room with someone else unless you've specified otherwise. You might be used to windows or doors being open or closed, or sleeping in a different temperature. Meal schedules might be entirely flipped from what you are used to. One country I visited didn't start the evening meal until well after the time I'm usually asleep, and open windows meant lots of evening noise. Figure out what will help you rest. I use earplugs. On flights I have a large dark silk scarf that I drape around my head to block out light and filter the air when I sleep.

Smart Phones

In most places I've been able to use my mobile phone by purchasing a local SIM card with a good amount of data on it. It's much cheaper than paying your carrier for an international plan. Text your organizer and contacts and let them know your


local number. Use WhatsApp to phone and video call your family overseas. It might also be useful to load a world clock app so that you don't accidentally call them at 3 a.m.

Learn to use your mapping app offline, as access to cell service might be limited. A language translating app is a fantastic backup tool.


Enjoy Yourself

Learning about new places and people is one of the best things about travel. You have the advantage of being with locals eager to show you the best of their homeland. Don't be embarrassed to ask all the questions that pop into your mind. It's amazing how much you can learn. ■

Lyric Montgomery Kinard is a SAQA JAM who resides in Cary, North Carolina. Her book, Tips for Traveling Quilt Teachers, is available from Amazon.com.

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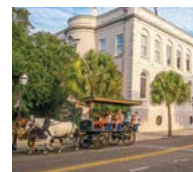
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Quilt Detail: BARBARA'S CIRCLE by Beth Nufer and Clem Buzick and DIAMOND EFFERVESCENCE by Beth Nufer and Clem Buzick Image Credit: Experience Grand Rapids, Terry Johnston

Editor's Notes

from page 6

myself, more good things started to happen. Quotes and images I needed for this issue started to come in, individual treasures I took to make a whole. They were added to items I already had, like Phyllis Cullen's piece on safety issues in our studios (page 14), Cindy Grisdela's interview with featured artist Sue Reno (page 8), Lyric Montgomery Kinard's how-to article on teaching abroad (page 31), and our *Inspired* column's look at a work by Caryl Bryer Fallert-Gentry, *Splash* (page 38).

It is an issue of creative outlook and accomplishment. May I suggest you let go and enjoy the read, preferably with a favorite pet at your side, where my little man was as I wrote this column. ■

In Memoriam

It is with regret that we report the passing of four SAQA members.

Katherine Balfour, of Australia, was always eager to learn and create even while battling with her body, says SAQA president Lisa Walton. We will miss her enthusiasm.

Eliza Brewster was one of SAQA's first members, a longtime donor, and an innovative artist whose work can be seen in the book *Art Quilts Unfolding* (page 285), and in Issue 3 of SAQA's subscription magazine *Art Quilt Quarterly* (called *Art Quilt Collector* at the time of Eliza's *Artists to Watch* interview). Her work also can be seen at fineartquilt.com.

Catherine Joan "Joanie" Pigford, of Taos, New Mexico, and Birmingham,

Alabama, was a true joy, quietly helping those in need. She supported many arts-based organizations and her life was filled with art making, dance, and time well spent as a fairy godmother to all.

Marion Coleman, a force within the contemporary quilt movement, provided community art education in schools, libraries, community organizations, and juvenile justice centers, while exhibiting her own work nationally and internationally. In 2018, Coleman was the recipient of the NEA National Heritage Fellowship—the nation's highest honor in the folk and traditional arts.

We express our condolences to the families and friends of all four of these beloved artists.



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opportunity for art quilts!*

Your generous gifts in support of SAQA exhibitions ensure viewers around the globe will see our work in renowned museums. Fine art venues are requesting our exhibitions, and your donations have made it possible for SAQA to have 15 themed exhibitions available to tour this year.

**Support from donors like you is vital to our organization
and its mission to promote the art quilt.**

Studio Safety

from page 15

on its heel and turning it back onto its face. Using irons that you don't have to stand up in between pressing tasks, such as the Oliso Pro iron with a pop-up feature, may be helpful.

Cutting devices, especially rotary cutters, lead to many emergency room trips. Using a rotary cutter that doesn't close on its own every time you put it down is asking for trouble. Use cutters that retract the blade when you put it down, especially when working with kids, friends who don't often use rotary cutters, students, or pets. This will save your feet too, especially if you work barefoot—another hazard considering what lies on studio floors. Scissors are safer, but still have sharp edges. Use scissors that spring open if you are prone to tendonitis or you're developing any hand problems.

Your fusing/drawing/folding/painting/cutting table should be elevated so that your elbows are, again, at about 90 degrees. Keep your tools in a convenient location to avoid the need to twist and turn to reach them. This practice will save your back and help maintain good posture.

It's all common sense isn't it? Yet, in the throes of creativity, in less than ideal conditions, or with deadlines looming, safety sense does not seem to be all that, well, common! Before you start another project, look around and see if you can improve on any of the conditions I've discussed—just don't look at MY floor! ■

Phyllis Cullen, MD, is a SAQA JAM and the regional rep for Hawaii. Her work has been included in many SAQA global exhibitions. As a physician, she specializes in treating patients with chronic pain, many of whom are artists, musicians, and other creatives.



City Side Lights, detail, Melody Randol; Topography II: Crest Trail, detail, Shannon Conley; The Journey, detail, Kathleen McCabe

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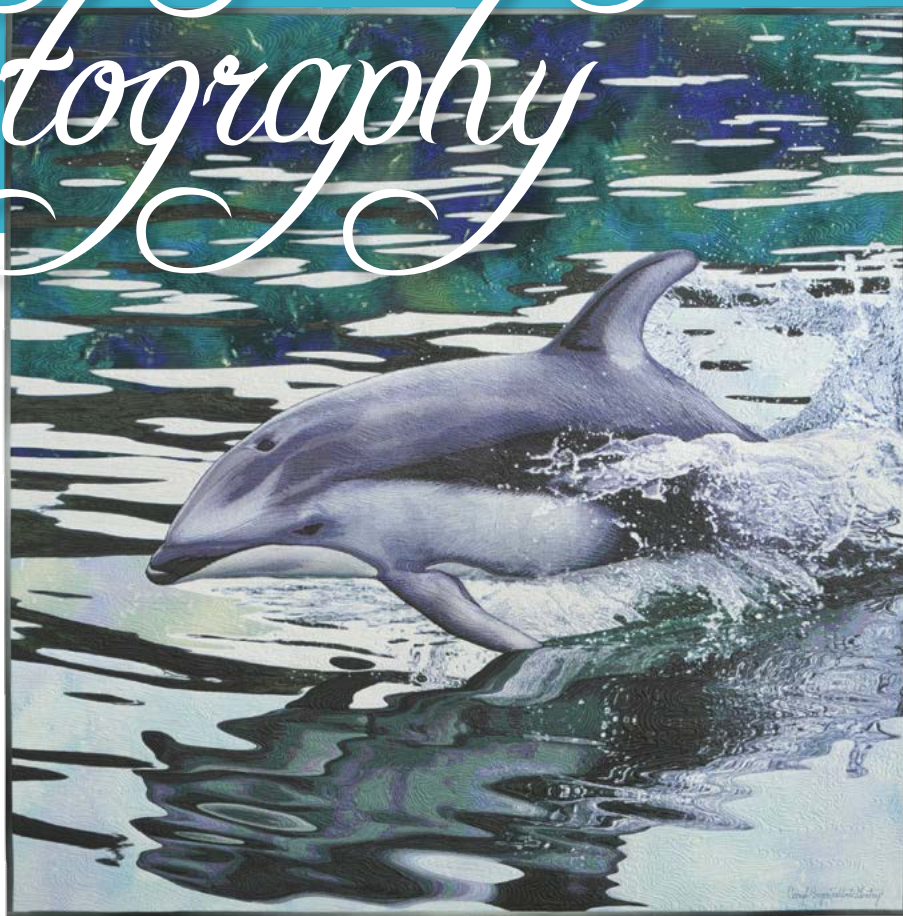
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Six quilt panels are displayed in a 2x3 grid. The top row shows a panel with red and yellow tulips, a panel with a purple and yellow dahlia, and a panel with blue and white flowers. The bottom row shows a panel with blue and white flowers, a panel with blue and white flowers, and a panel with pink and white flowers.

INSPIRED BY

photography

by N.K. Quan



Splash

41 x 41 inches | 2018

A newfound interest in photography led artist Caryl Bryer Fallert-Gentry to add digital fiber art to her practice. "The use of photography and digital manipulation is not new, but it was new to me. It introduced me to unexpected possibilities in terms of my art."

Fallert-Gentry's quilt, *Splash*, was inspired by a photo taken by her husband, Ron Gentry, during a photo tour to Vancouver Island in British Columbia, Canada. True to her philosophy of creating art that lifts the spirit, she sought to capture the majesty of a pod of dolphins swimming and jumping through the waves. "I choose to focus on positive images and things that bring me joy."

Working directly on the screen of her Microsoft Surface laptop, she

manipulated the photograph using Corel Draw and Corel Photo-Paint software, heavily modifying the dolphin, splash, and reflection. The final image was printed on cotton fabric and incorporated into a background made from four different fabrics. While most of her past quilts have been pieced, she finds the need to include some appliqué in her more realistic pieces. The work was then quilted with dozens of different colors of thread. An iridescent thread and dots of textile paint were added to give sparkle to and extend the splash.

Best known for her abstract quilts featuring organic, curved-seam designs, Fallert-Gentry's art quilts are based on her very real immediate environment and travels. "Sometimes I just use a

particular combination of colors or organic shapes that catch my eye and are purely abstract when they show up in my quilts. *Splash* may be the most realistic piece I have completed so far."

Fallert-Gentry's longstanding ability to create visual illusions, master intricacies of light and shadow, and produce precise stitching is the reason she is a recognized leader in the art quilt medium. Her skilled, artistic approach to digital art underscores the creative new possibilities she has discovered in its use.

Fallert-Gentry lives in Port Townsend, Washington. You can view her work at bryerpatch.com. ■

N.K. Quan is a Phoenix-based writer and editor.



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