

# SAQA<sup>TM</sup> JOURNAL

STUDIO ART QUILT ASSOCIATES

2020 | Volume 30, No. 4



**INSIDE:** WILLY DORELEIJERS • JURIED ARTIST SHOWCASE • WIN THROUGH REJECTION • INSPIRED • WISE BATTING CHOICES • PRO TIPS TO ZOOM, SELL, STITCH, & SHIP • OPPOSITES ATTRACT

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 51 x 35.5 inches | 2018

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To find out more about SAQA, contact Martha Sielman, executive director, by phone at 860.530.1551, or by email at [execdirector@saqa.com](mailto:execdirector@saqa.com).

Explore varied resources on our website at [www.saqa.com](http://www.saqa.com). Annual membership levels for U.S. and international members, listed in USD, are: Artist/Associate, \$80; Juried Artist, \$145; and Student, \$45 (must present full-time student ID).

Studio Art Quilt Associates, Inc. (SAQA) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote the art quilt. Through exhibitions, resources, publications, and membership, we seek to increase appreciation for the art quilt as a fine art medium and to support our members in their artistic and professional growth.

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# Find strong connections at SAQA regional events

by Deborah Boschert



Some of my most memorable experiences connecting with SAQA members have been at regional events. It's exciting to see the new energy around virtual regional events in the past several months.

SAQA is divided into more than forty regions offering members local social, educational, and exhibition opportunities. Each region has a representative who helps coordinate events, shares information, and acts as a liaison between regional members and all the opportunities available through SAQA. Sometimes the regions are divided into small geographic areas. In fact, the regional rep for SAQA Europe & Middle East recently connected two members who live in Poland. They knew each other, but they didn't know they were both SAQA members!

Thinking back over my time in SAQA, I remember willingly driving through the Maryland countryside to meetings at one member's big beautiful studio. There was a sitting area where we'd eat sack lunches and talk about museums we'd visited, new tools we'd discovered, and our recent successes and challenges—creative and personal.

Another wonderful memory is from when I was visiting a friend in

Portland, Oregon, on the day of the regional SAQA studio tours. What a great way to see the city and meet lots of fabulous artists. We visited a tiny studio up a back stairway where we had to punch in a special code to enter. Another studio was in a renovated school building. One artist welcomed us into her basement studio. SAQA members work in all kinds of unique spaces.

Here in north Texas we used to have our local meetings at a tiny atelier in the Dallas city center. We squeezed between big bolts of fine laces and drawers of buttons. I'd look around the room and see artists whose work had been juried into prestigious shows and others who had just taken their first art quilting workshop. We've outgrown that small space and are eager to get back to meeting in a local quilt shop's classroom.

Show and tell at regional meetings is always exceptional because everyone is welcome to share what they've created. It takes bravery to present in front of a group. I enjoy watching people take that first step as much as I enjoy seeing the art. Regions are finding ways to have virtual show and tell. We're sharing digital images and figuring out how to hold up

small pieces to our computer cameras. It works!

Regional zoom events are open to members outside of the host region. Some are hosting expert teachers and artists. Staff and committee members are visiting regional meetings to share information about programs.

My advice to you? Seek out a regional event. Some groups are beginning to have in-person events following best health and safety practices. Others are meeting regularly on Zoom. If there's not a regional event in your area, you could set one up. Your rep will be happy to help; visit [www.saqa.com/regions](http://www.saqa.com/regions) for more information. I know it can be intimidating to go to your first meeting or return after a long absence. There may be other factors that make it challenging for you, but give it a try. SAQA members will be welcoming and helpful. If you're a member who attends regularly, extend a warm welcome to new faces. There are so many things happening in SAQA and others may need a little help finding opportunities that fit their interests.

I'll be visiting some regional virtual meetings in the coming months. I'm looking forward to seeing you and hearing about the creative things happening in your part of the world. ■

Artwork by Carrie Payne



# Together we can do so much!

Our art brings us together. Our passion for the art quilt is shared in this community of artists and collectors.

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# The best time to up your game is now

by Diane Howell

I'm not gonna lie: the middle of a pandemic is not a fun time to put out a magazine. Sources go missing. Creatives lose focus. Story planning goes out the window. I can't stop looking things up, and then I look them up again. And then I look them up again for good measure. Nothing is certain and it's best to be sure. Sure of what? I could tell you if I knew what day it is.

Largely through serendipity, this final issue of 2020 has emerged with a theme—just not the one I planned. You will read bits and parts of that original plan in the next issue as writers break through Covid-19 obstacles that are outside of their control. But here's a secret: You are reading stories planned for Issue 3 on these pages. This new dance trend started months ago, and it involves lots of shuffling.

The new ideas that presented themselves for this issue are about how to approach your creative practice with a new level of professionalism. What details do you need to know to ship a quilt like a pro, and how do you save yourself money in the process? Allison Reker, SAQA's membership coordinator, collected our best shipping pointers in a story that starts on page 30.

How do you build sales? You embrace the practice of being a good partner with the organizations and galleries that exhibit and market your work by abiding by a fair commission payment. SAQA Juried Artist Dorothy Raymond explains why this is important, and how it benefits you, on page 13.

How do you offer a top-notch Zoom presentation? SAQA member



Clara Nartey offers tips on hosting a professional Zoom presentation beginning on page 10.

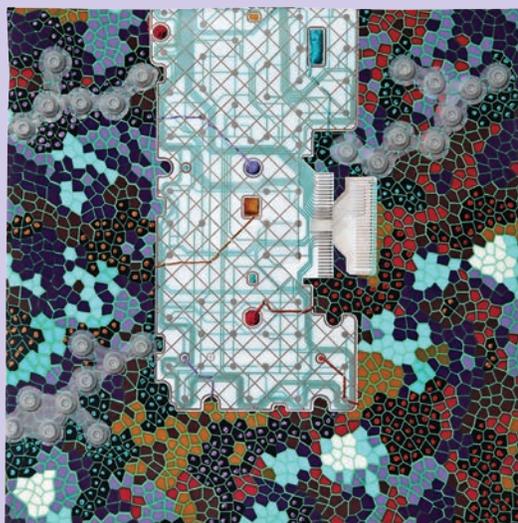
And, finally, how do you stitch like a pro? Choose the appropriate thread to enhance the design of your pieces. Longarm quilter and writer ZJ Humbach presents a story on thread on page 24.

All four of these stories are focused on improving your skills and creating a mindset for success. In the same spirit, we include an article written by me on batting beginning on page 33. It explores which batts are likely to last the longest, and which ones SAQA members are using. Give it a read; it might entice you to try new materials in your art quilts.

I like these stories for another reason too. They are concepts that are easily understood and can be easily implemented without leaving the house. So sit back and enjoy the read, think about the possibilities, and gain inspiration from our galleries. Today is a great time to up your game. ■

**Regina Benson**  
*Network At My Fingertips*  
12 x 12 inches | 2014  
Photo by John Bonath

*This piece is part of Member Gallery: Tech Savvy. View the gallery's other images on pages 8-9.*



# SAVE THE DATE



## OCEANS APART CONNECTED BY ART

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Coming in April 2021, SAQA's annual conference goes virtual again! The Special Events Committee is working with our Oceania region to share the people and inspiration that make this colorful region unique.

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# Tech Savvy



Alicia Merrett

**Quagma**

47 x 26 inches | 2019

Abstract iPad painting manipulated via apps, commercially printed onto fabric.

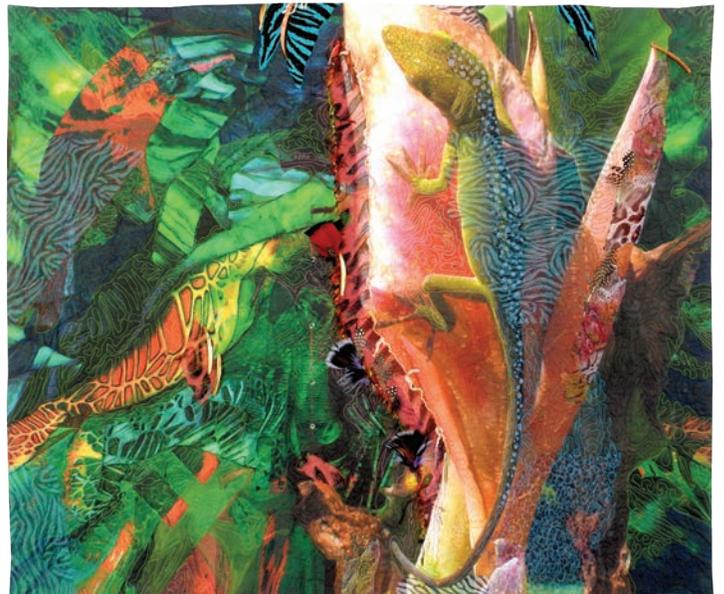


Rickie Seifried

**Madonna**

30 x 25 inches | 2018

Combined images of a weathered statue and graffiti.

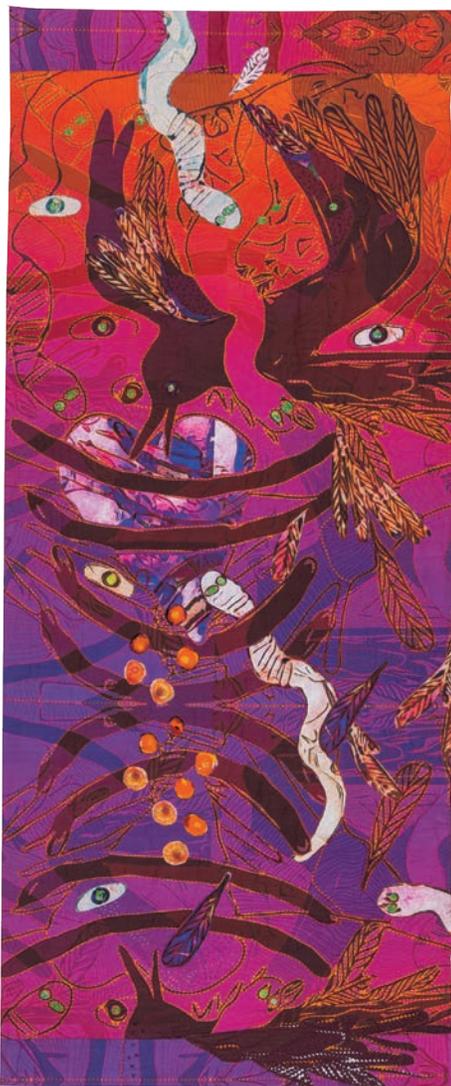


Marian Zielinski

**Mutual Life of the Universe**

34 x 41 inches | 2019

Work composed in Adobe Photoshop using photos and scanned images of textures created by artist. Tulle and embellishments added to printed whole-cloth image.



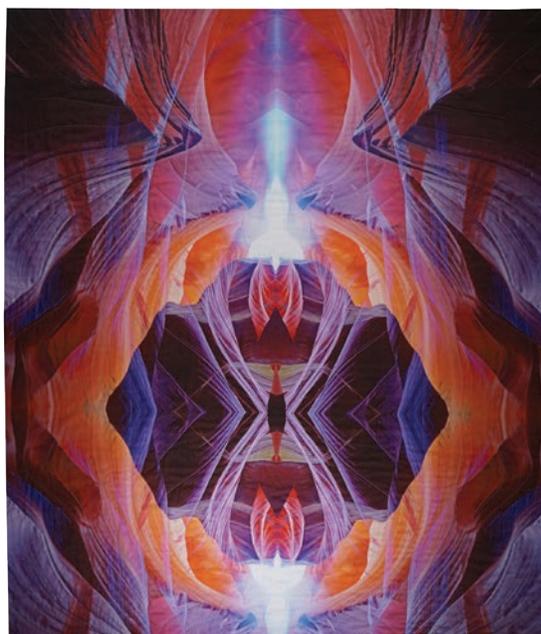
Susie Monday

**Season: Heartbreak**

78 x 32 inches | 2018

Photo of a painting by artist, altered with iPad apps, printed as a layer image.

Photo by Ansen Seale



Frauke Palmer

**Princess of Serendip**

59 x 51 inches | 2018

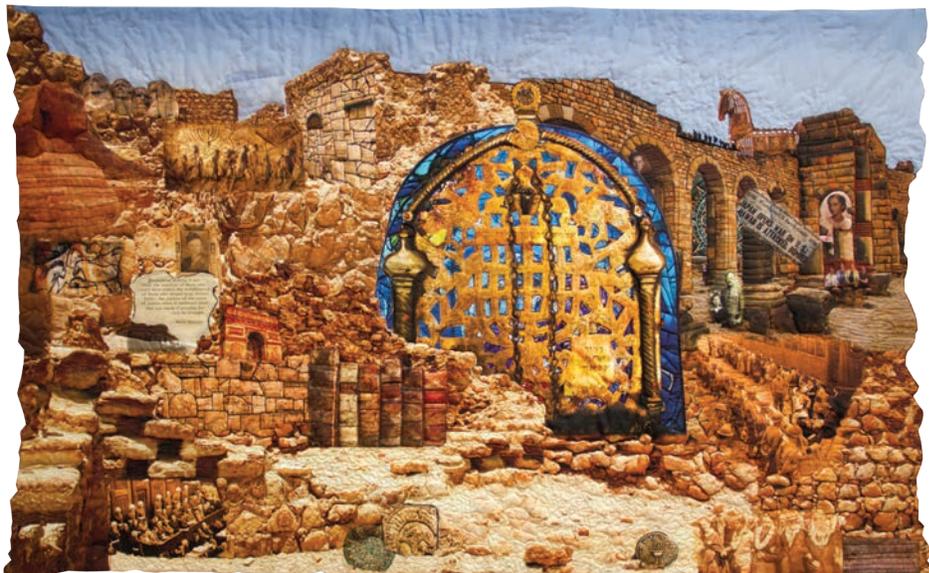
Computer-manipulated photos of slot canyons in Arizona.

Sandra Lauterbach

**Crystal Ball of History**

40 x 65 inches | 2017

Photo montage.



Birgit Schueller

**The Sprinter**

37.5 x 80 inches | 2017

Drawn image of twelve-step sprint sequence digitized and manipulated with computer apps, then stitched individually with Pro-Stitcher computerized quilting system on HQ Infinity longarm.

Photo by UQSM team

# How to ace online presentations

by Clara Nartey

Due to the global pandemic, our world has changed in unimaginable ways. One of those ways is how we interact with one another. Video calls and video conferencing are part of our lives. It's unlikely that when things return to "normal" and we can return to in-person gatherings, that our use of video conferencing will totally go away. That means that Zoom and similar platforms are here to stay.

So, do you Zoom like a pro?

Whether you are a professional presenter who has done tons of in-person presentations, or someone who is simply looking to expand your online services, you can only benefit from mastering Zoom. This article will give you tips on how to ace your Zoom presentations.

What do you do before you appear on Zoom?

## Be prepared

Let's start with your mindset about video presentations. A presentation is a presentation. Period! Whether you're online or in person, take it just as seriously. Don't compromise on quality. Dress like you would when you're doing an in-person presentation. Be prompt. Show up on time and be respectful of when to end.

The way you think about your presentation impacts your results. When you operate with the right mindset, it has a positive impact on the quality of your delivery.

Consider using support materials, such as a slide deck, downloadable

workbooks, or reading materials, to help with your presentation. If you're using a slide deck, make sure you've followed the generally accepted principles for developing a good slide presentation. Remember not to use text that is too small to read, and don't overload your slides with too many lines of text.

Remember to practice. Many problems people encounter with video presentations can be easily avoided through practice. Always rehearse at least a day before you present to an audience. When you do, you'll notice things you can correct. Ask someone to watch your practice run in order to get their feedback so that you can

avoid much disaster by simply ensuring that everything you will need to present is ready to go.

## The basics

For a video presentation, two things are important: the visuals and the audio.

Let's start with the visuals. We talked a little bit about these in regard to dressing well, showing up with your A-game, and having a lot of energy—don't go on an empty stomach, that's for sure! But all of that professionalism will be delivered via video, leaving no question that the video quality needs to be great. That means that your internet connec-

## The way you think about your presentation impacts your results.

tweak your presentation accordingly.

Alternatively, video record yourself delivering your presentation. Review the recorded video to see where you can make improvements. It's very easy for the camera to pick up certain cues, such as disinterest, frustration, and exhaustion. Some questions to ask yourself are:

- Am I speaking loud enough?
- Am I looking into the camera when I speak?
- Do I lose steam after a few minutes of presenting?

Closely related to rehearsal is the task of testing your tools. You can

tion has to be strong. Record a video over your internet connection to see if the quality is choppy. A quick way to boost your internet quality is to plug your computer directly into your modem at home instead of using a Wi-Fi connection.

Also, have as few people on the internet as possible during your presentation. The more devices that are in use on the internet, the more your internet bandwidth is divided, making it less likely that your video quality will be good. If your internet connection is terribly weak, you may simply want to upgrade it.



Set up your computer's camera or your webcam ahead of time. Check that it is at your eye level. You can achieve this height by using a stack of books or an adjustable table to raise your computer. Do this setup before you start so that you don't spend the first fifteen minutes of your presentation adjusting your camera.

In order for your picture quality to be good, your light source needs to be good. Let the light source be on your face, not behind you.

Place your computer in a clean and uncluttered spot. For example, your kitchen may not be the best backdrop if it's cluttered, as attendees will be able to see everything behind you. Hang a plain piece of fabric behind you if necessary.

Next, let's talk about audio. Your presentation is not complete without sound, so what do you do to ensure that attendees can hear you loud and clear, and that you can also hear them? Perform an audio test, also ahead of your presentation. The quality of your computer audio is not always the best for doing online presentations. You have to get really close to the computer to be heard clearly. Believe it or not, your cell phone

headset may work much better than your computer's audio. You can also explore buying a clip-on microphone.

### The pro approach

On the day of your presentation, several steps ensure a smooth Zoom experience. Those steps include:

- Show up fifteen minutes before the scheduled start time.
- Make sure that battery-operated devices, such as your laptop, are fully charged and plugged into a power source so that they don't die in the middle of your presentation.
- Turn off alarms and other notifications on your computer and your cell phone before you begin.

Once your presentation starts, keep your audience engaged. As a presenter, you will feed off the energy of your audience just as much as they will feed off yours. Not being able to directly see your audience is no excuse for low involvement. One way to break the cycle of a low attention span—a notorious issue with virtual conferences—is to ask questions. Your goal is to cultivate participation rather than to test knowledge.

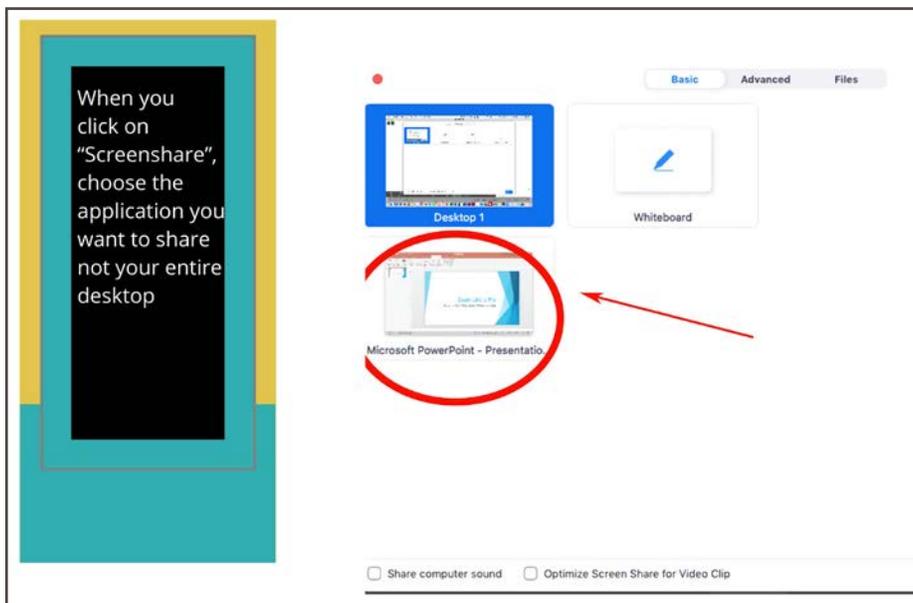
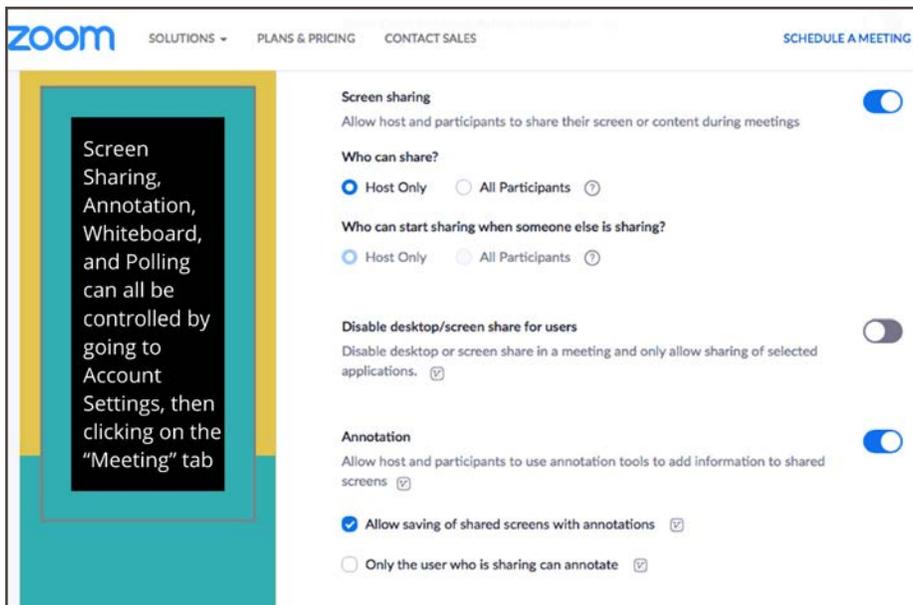
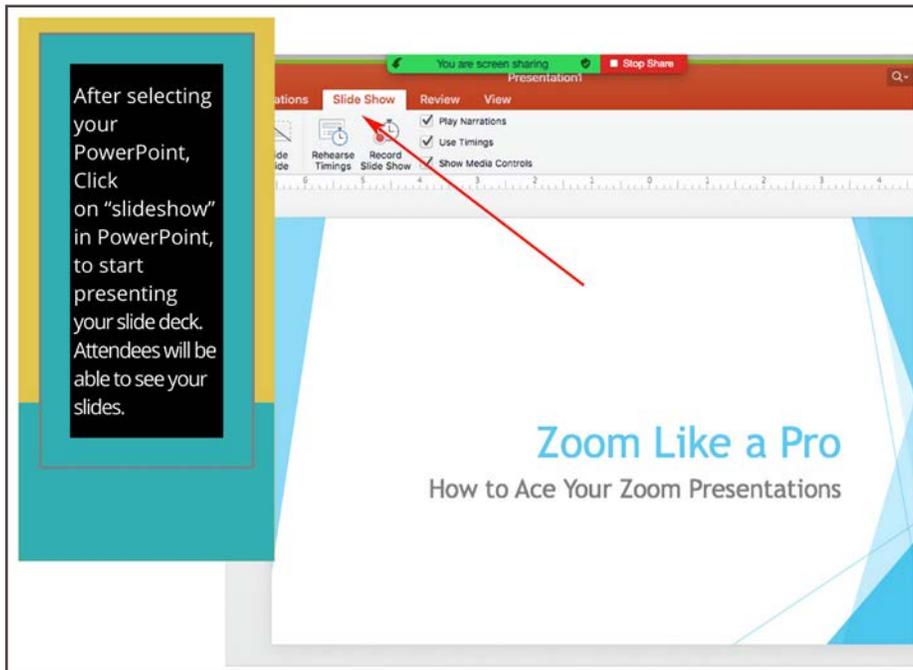
For example, you might ask of all participants: "Do you agree with me that color is powerful? If you agree, type the word 'yes' in the chat box." Then wait for their answers. Read some of them back so that everyone can "hear" them.

Interspersing your presentation with stories or practical examples is another good way to keep your presentation lively. Depending on your health and the length of your presentation, standing up will boost your energy, keep you alert, and increase your confidence. If you're used to doing in-person presentations, standing up also puts you in a familiar posture.

### Zoom tools

Zoom has developed several tools that boost your ability to share and interact. They include:

- **Share Screen:** This function is used to share your presentation slides, photos, or other materials that are stored on your computer. When you use this tool, you've got the option to share your entire desktop or a particular application. In order to prevent accidentally sharing personal information, don't share your



entire desktop. Have the application you want to share, such as PowerPoint, open in the background so that you can choose to share only that application.

- **Annotation:** You can use the whiteboard and annotation features to make your presentation more interactive. Using your annotation feature, you and your participants (as host you have the option to control who uses this feature) can type, draw, or doodle on the screen to make points.
- **Polling:** When you enable polls under your account settings in Zoom, you'll be able to create polls for any of your scheduled meetings. You can have several polls per meeting. When the meeting begins, hosts and co-hosts can launch the polls anytime during the meeting. Polls can be used in a number of ways, including as icebreakers (ask a funny question), a way to refocus the meeting, or to solicit feedback.

### Looking ahead

Your presentation is over. Awesome job!!! What's next? Give yourself a pat on the back and go take a break. Later, review the video recording so that you know what to tweak the next time around. Also, if you used a poll to capture your attendees' feedback, review their responses and make adjustments.

Congratulations—you're now Zooming like a pro! ■

*Clara Nartey is a SAQA member who resides in West Haven, Connecticut. She is an artist who creates video lessons and writes about the practice and science of creativity. Learn more about her at [www.claranartey.com](http://www.claranartey.com).*

# Commissions key part of marketing process

by Dorothy Raymond

Paying commissions on the sale of artwork is an accepted business practice that supports a healthy connection between artists and collectors.

How important is it? Imagine this scenario:

You have created a wonderful work of art, entered it into a prestigious exhibition, and had it accepted. You are over the moon when it sells on opening night!

But when you receive the check from the organizer, it's for less than the sales price. What gives? Why do you have to share the price with the event organizer, which could be SAQA? You paid the entry fee. Doesn't that cover costs?

Well, no. Entry fees represent an important but limited portion of the expense required to mount an exhibition. For every exhibition, be it regional or part of SAQA Global Exhibitions, SAQA has dozens of expenses—including publicity, catalog production, shipping to and from the venue, shipping supplies, staff time, and insurance—that aren't covered by the entry fees. Those costs mean that commissions are a critical source of revenue for our organization, just as they are for any museum or gallery where you exhibit your work. In effect, commissions help ensure that the cost of exhibition opportunities are not subsidized by all SAQA members to benefit a few select artists. At a gallery, commissions represent that business's profit, i.e., funds that allow the gallery to stay open and show your work.

Commission rates are clearly stated in the contract you sign when you take part in any exhibition. Once you sign the paperwork, you have agreed to the terms and conditions of the exhibition, including commissions and any other costs outlined in the document.

Do those conditions expire? What happens then? Let's look at another possibility.

What if, after the exhibition is over, someone who saw your piece

of Xanadu Gallery in Scottsdale, Arizona, covered this topic in a recent blog post:

"...[T]he value of any piece of art is comprised of two distinct components. One part of the value of the art is created by you as you are in the studio employing your talent and creativity to produce this masterpiece. The second part of the value is created by all of the time, effort, and creativity that go into marketing, promoting, and selling that work of art.

**“[C]ommissions are a critical source of revenue for our organization, just as they are for any museum or gallery.”**

in a SAQA exhibition wants to buy it? Do you still owe a commission? You need to read the fine print of the agreement you signed to see if this payment is required. There is usually a period where a commission is owed to the organizer or gallery, particularly if a potential buyer cites the exhibition as the source for knowing about you and your work. If you intentionally delay the sale until you don't owe a commission, that action is withholding a well-earned sale percentage from its rightful owner. Again, you're letting others bear the cost to introduce a buyer to your artwork.

Similar logic applies to a gallery's bottom line. Jason Horejs, owner

"Which is more difficult, creating the art or selling it? Every artist would have a different answer to this question, but I suspect that a majority of artists feel it's much easier to create art than it is to sell it."

If you happen to be good at marketing, you may not need gallery representation. You may not need the exposure coming from being part of a SAQA exhibition. The choice you have as an artist, according to Horejs, is to play by rules when exhibiting at a show or in a gallery. Paying a commission is part of that process. ■

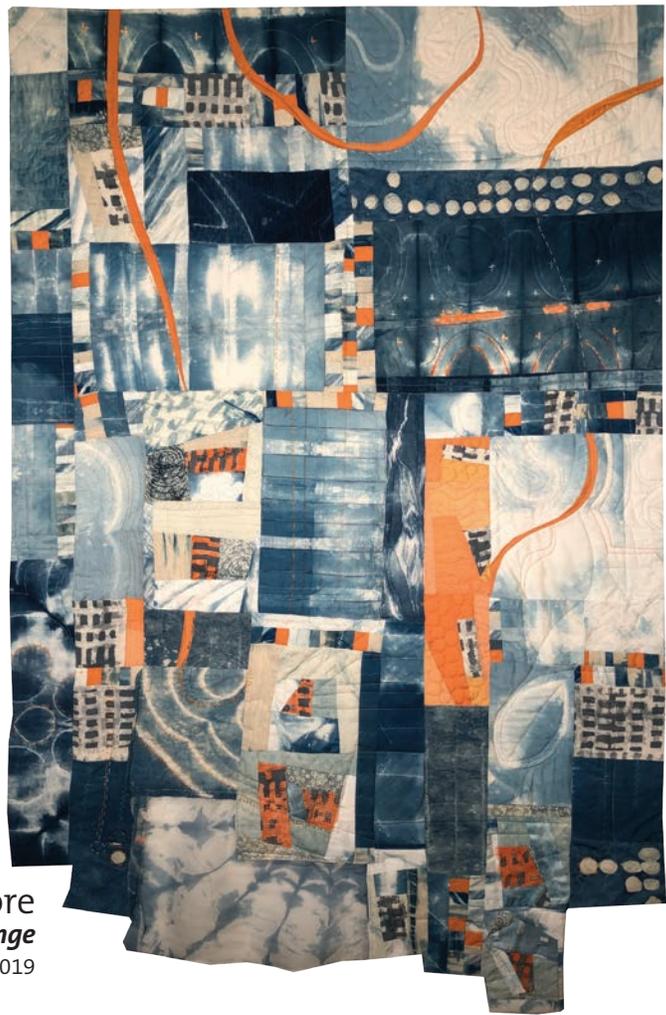
*Dorothy Raymond is a SAQA Juried Artist who resides in Loveland, Colorado.*

## Selections from *Opposites Attract*

Opposing forces shape our reality in ways that are both readily apparent and hidden. Artwork included in this exhibition explores contradictions and affinities: Yin and Yang, the irresistible force versus the immovable object, black and white, and other types of opposites.

This dramatic exhibition was juried by Gail M. Brown, an independent curator who trained as a printmaker at the Philadelphia College of Art. The exhibition benefactor is Frank Klein.

For more information, please visit [www.saqa.com/oppositesattract](http://www.saqa.com/oppositesattract).



Jeannie Moore  
*Osage Orange*  
52 x 33 inches | 2019

Bobbi Baugh  
*Rust Happens*  
43 x 59 inches | 2019





Margaret Abramshe  
*Divide*

53 x 34 inches | 2018

Shelley Rothgeb  
*Peony*

37 x 37 inches | 2019

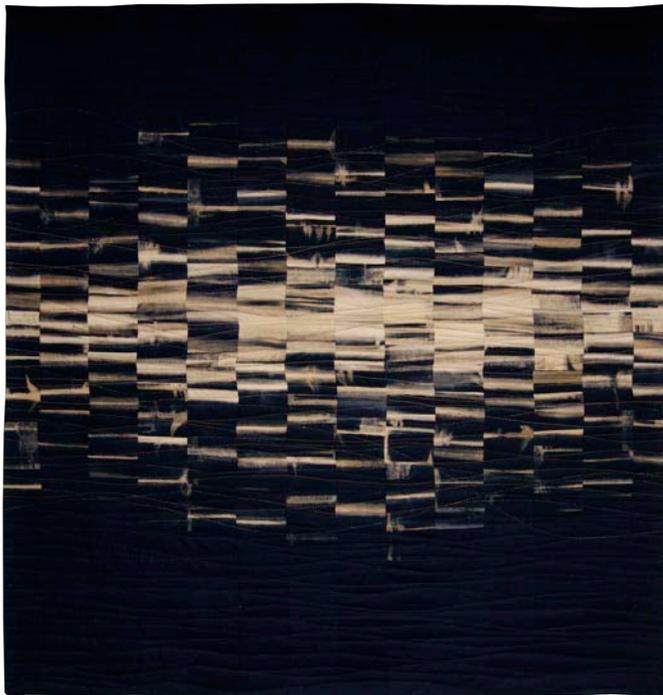
Photo by christopherphotography.com



Susanna Hotchkiss

*I, Too, Am The Fragrance Of The Earth*

56 x 40.5 inches | 2019



Eunhee Lee

*Coexistence of Light and Darkness*

36.5 x 34.5 inches | 2019

# All Member Survey

by Deborah Boschert



The SAQA All Member Survey is complete! It will be a useful tool for years to come. We are happy with the results,

which offer a snapshot of an exciting time for our organization. This document tells us how our members are creating, learning, and connecting—and gives us insights about how to achieve our mission and provide tangible benefits to members.

Now that the development and launch of the survey is complete, we are in the midst of reporting the results and sharing the data with board, staff, and volunteer leaders. We didn't want members to wait too long before getting some numbers. We hope you enjoyed the *Survey Snapshots* that appeared in your

Wednesday *Member News* emails in August and September.

Did you know this project has been in the works for over a year? A dedicated team of volunteers began by talking with board and committee chairs about what information would be useful to them. Then we spent a few months thinking about many different possibilities for questions and responses. To make the survey manageable, we edited our broad concepts into sections and questions that we felt were most important. It was a wonderfully collaborative process with input from members with different experiences. Big thanks to the team, including Jayne Gaskins, who coordinated our marketing efforts; Candice Phelan, who did all the survey design and lead the research process; Gene Looman, who provided technical expertise and coordinated comment analysis; and Marika Pineda, who researched and wrote our final reports. Other volunteers through the process, who each contributed

their own areas of expertise, include Carol Kimble, Amanda Snavelly, Mary Zaun, Elizabeth Byrom, Molly Flowers, Margaret Phillips, Barbara Sferra, and Jean Sredl. They were assisted by Lucy Shaiken, our SAQA communication coordinator.

We were especially pleased that so many members took time to provide thoughtful answers and responses to the survey. Thank you!

The strength of any organization is in its members and your voices have been heard. We received 1,365 responses, which is nearly 38 percent of all SAQA members. This is an excellent response rate, according to survey experts. We think our catchy marketing and a recognizable logo helped increase awareness and motivated members to log on and complete the survey. Members from twenty-nine different countries responded, and we ensured that anyone who needed a translation from English had that opportunity.

see "Member Survey" on page 42

## Survey Snapshots

We asked you about exhibitions. Here's what you told us:

1. Exhibitions ranked high overall. Opportunities, in order of importance are: global and regional in-person; *SAQA Journal* and *Art Quilt Quarterly*; SAQA virtual galleries; global and regional trunk shows.
2. Three most desired types of exhibition innovations: partnerships with other organizations or artists; exhibitions with no themes or other restrictions; artist or curator video interviews.
3. Additional exhibition interests, in ranked order: virtual exhibitions; collaborations with artists of other media or with other professionals; sales of art in the SAQA store.



# Paula Kovarik named SAQA Award winner



Paula Kovarik

***The Usual Suspects: Presto-Change,  
Empty Rhetoric, Caught Red-  
Handed and Sideshow***

40 x 54 inches | 2020

Congratulations to Paula Kovarik, the SAQA Award winner at Quilt Visions 2020, produced by Visions Art Museum in San Diego, California.

In a unanimous decision by the jurors, her piece, *The Usual Suspects: Presto-Change, Empty Rhetoric, Caught Red-Handed and Sideshow*, was found to best fit the award criteria that states the winning work be compelling, dynamic, and

progressive. The work uses repurposed quilt pieces, cotton thread, cotton fabrics, wool batting, and raw silk panels backed by polyester interfacing. Kovarik received a \$500 prize.

The SAQA award is presented to one artist at three prestigious textile exhibitions: *Quilt National*, *Art Quilt Elements*, and *Quilt Visions*. The winner is named by the jurors of each exhibition.

*Juried Artist Showcase* is a gallery of work produced by artists who have each been named a Juried Artist of SAQA. A Juried Artist has successfully presented a portfolio to the Juried Artist Review Panel. This portfolio includes a selected body of work and documentation showing a professional approach to art.

**Laura Jaszkowski**

*The Lady in the Wind,  
Antelope Canyon, Arizona*

32 x 24 inches | 2019



**Kathleen McCabe**

*A Quiet Moment*

28 x 42 inches | 2018





**Ann Johnston**

***Wave 14***

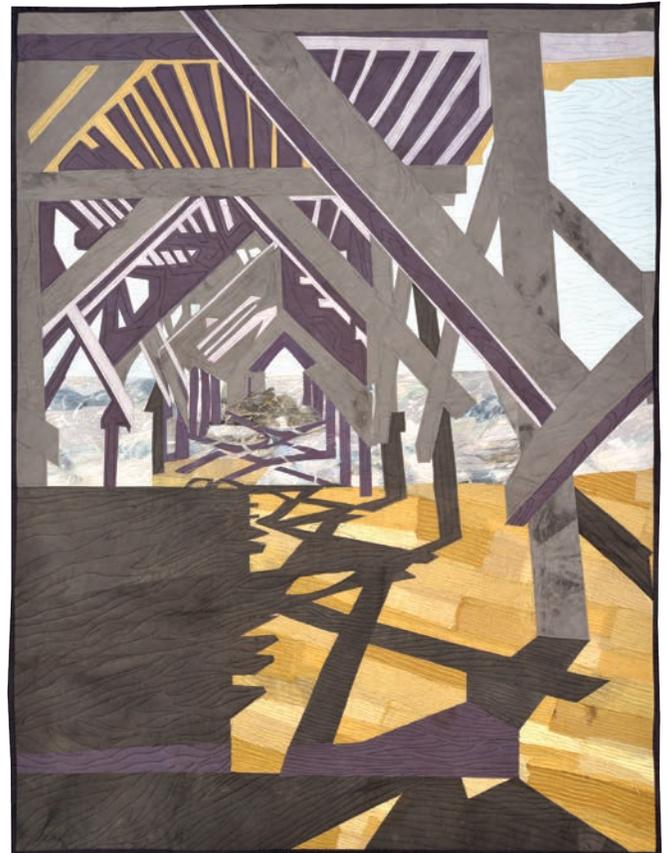
30 x 50 inches | 2017



**Karin Lusnak**

***Stepping Out***

26 x 11.25 x 5 inches | 2019



**Jeannie Palmer Moore**

***Wrightsville Pier***

48 x 36 inches | 2017

# WILLY DORELEIJERS

Lined up for success

by Cindy Grisdela



The structure of line is crucial to Willy Doreleijers's approach to textile art. Skinny lines, bold and colorful lines, wavy lines, and more find their way into her graphic images. Her challenge as an artist is to find a way to achieve that graphic image using "gossamer lines and/or colors on textiles," she says.

The importance of dynamic line in Doreleijers's work is evident in *Industrial Revolution* (this issue's cover image). Heavy dark lines in black, red, and white define industrial shapes in the composition, while thin wavy black lines add detail. The contrast between the strong straight lines of the building shapes and the

wavy lines of the trees and her other natural forms is stark, suggesting the tension between human-made objects and nature.

"I want to direct the viewer to a visual confrontation. Whether the result is completely abstract or reality made abstract, the meaning will automatically become clear. It is my way of expressing a story," Doreleijers explains.

Doreleijers is from Dordrecht, Netherlands. She has always been interested in textiles and spent her free time making things. She took courses in technical fashion, learning to draw patterns, design clothing, and explore embroidery techniques, but those



*Cat Called Jerry MaaiMaai, In progress*

skills didn't satisfy her desire to work with cloth as an expressive medium.

All that changed when Doreleijers visited an art quilt exhibition at a textile museum in 1997. "For me, this was the missing link between textile and art," she says. She sought teachers in quilting, patchwork, and textile instruction and then began to chart her own path.

"Textile is a material that is not easy to manipulate. It stretches and pulls on all sides. The final result should be like a wall hanging drawn with the sewing machine," she says.

Doreleijers spent years refining her own personal style, experimenting with a variety of techniques to achieve the results she sought. Each piece begins with an idea—a car on the street, a pet photo, a front door, a street scene—then is converted into a potential design using photographs or drawings. She used to design the work on paper first, but now uses the computer to easily design lines and shapes and add depth to her designs. Next, she evaluates which techniques will best express her design idea.

Starting with a white background fabric, a batik method allows her to add color drop by drop to create the shapes she wants. She may also use



*Cat Called Jerry MaaiMaai*

39 x 27.5 inches | 2016



screen printing to create depth and transparency, stenciling, and transfer dyeing to draw expressive lines. The stitching line is the final step.

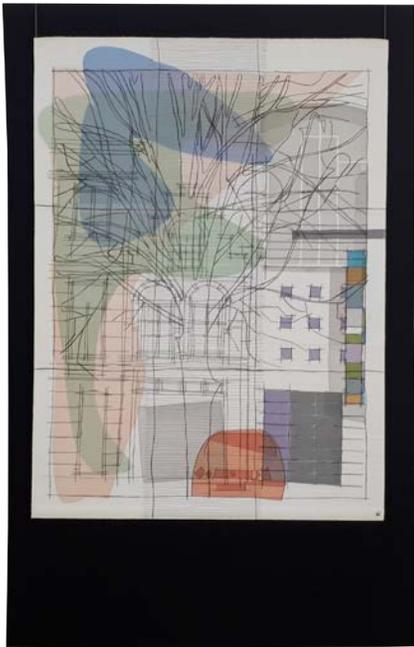
*Cat Called Jerry MaaiMaai* (page 21) shows many of these techniques in the finished piece, and a process shot gives a glimpse of the steps involved to create the composition. The cat's face and fur are more detailed than

the rest of its body, and show up in vivid contrast against the dark, painted background in the upper left part of the design. The fabrics are cotton and polyester organza.

Doreleijers's inspiration comes from everyday surroundings. Her husband is an architect, and his work inspires her as well. *Time Fronts* was created to express tension

between modern and historic buildings in an urban environment.

She likes to draw attention to the influence of humans on their living environment, and explore themes surrounding the evolution of technology from past to future. A recent series of work addresses some of these issues, including *Industrial Revolution* and *Hidden Revolution*. "Technological



**Time Fronts**  
67 x 48.5 inches | 2012

**Hidden Revolution**  
58 x 39.5 inches | 2019

## Stretching 24 Hrs

3 x 14.5 feet | 2017



evolution from a distant past into the unknown future is a recurring theme.”

She says, “The interplay of lines and colors is an important factor in my work. The composition ultimately determines where lines and color go together or individually [create] tension.” This interaction is an ongoing exploration in Doreleijers’s art.

*Stretching 24 Hrs* is a monumental piece measuring approximately 3 x 14.5 feet that defines the passage of time in a single day through painted

and stitched lines. The sunrise is a focal point on the left, outlined with colorful shapes as it emerges from a seascape.

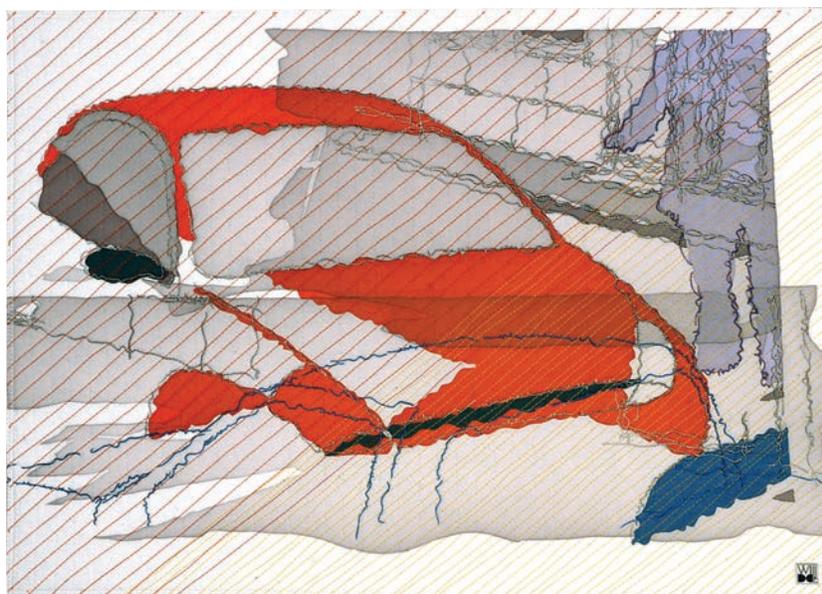
In *Streetcar*, the car is suggested through strong red shapes that don’t comprise a whole vehicle, but leave no doubt as to their inspiration. Three-fourths of a person and the hint of a roadway render a street scene with an economy of line and shape. The piece is activated with diagonal stitching lines in different shades of red.

Doreleijers works four days a week in data management for an

international trading company that provides steel and tubes. “It is totally opposite of my art expression, but it gives a good balance between work and art.” She enjoys two days in the studio and spends the remaining day of the week on household and other tasks.

Her studio is on the second floor of her home, giving her the opportunity to work in the evenings. She uses a Bernina B750 sewing machine. Vacation time is often

see “Willy Doreleijers” on page 39



## Streetcar

16 x 27 inches | 2011



# Let thread variety add texture, drama to your next work

Photo provided by Aurifil

by ZJ Humbach

Like most quilters, I am addicted to fabric. As a professional longarm quilter, I am also addicted to thread. I continue to be amazed at how going just a shade lighter or darker can completely change the look of the quilting. The same goes for changing

the weight of the thread, or even using a different type of thread.

Karen L. Miller of Redbird Quilt Co. is a master educator for Aurifil, a natural fiber thread company headquartered in Italy, and serves as its Aurifilosophy program coordinator.

Miller recently gave me an in-depth look at Aurifil's manufacturing process and shared her insights on thread.

A spool of cotton thread looks simple enough, but did you know that it takes approximately forty-eight manufacturing hours to produce one dye lot of that thread? "I can't speak for other manufacturers, but

Aurifil uses a fifteen-step thread production process," says Miller. "As a family-owned business, the company oversees each step, from procuring the raw material in Egypt to boxing the finished product in Italy."

The spinning step transforms natural cotton bolls, known as staples, into single strands of cotton. Longer staples produce stronger thread with less lint. During this first step, individual strands of a specific weight are prepared. This step is unique for each different weight of thread, which can be 80-, 50-, 40-, 28-, or 12-weight.

The doubling step takes two or three individual strands of spun cotton and puts them side-by-side onto reels. Then the strands are twisted



*There are fifteen steps in Aurifil's thread production process. During the singeing step (left) the thread passes by a naked flame to remove excess fibers.*



*The reeling process transfers thermo-fastened thread from reels to skeins.*



*Aurifil thread skeins are removed from the enclosed mercerization unit and transferred to the dyeing wardrobe.*

slowly and accurately together to a predetermined twist per inch. This twisting step enables multiple strands to begin to form a single two- or three-ply thread.

From there, the thread is sent for thermo fastening, which is a steam bath that secures the twist on the thread strands to prevent separation. Then it's off to the singeing step, where the thread passes by a naked flame to remove the excess fibers, known as the hairs of the cotton. This step is critical for creating high-quality thread with minimal lint.

In a process known as reeling, the thread is transferred from the reels to skeins prior to dyeing. If thread were dyed on a reel, the pressure required to penetrate to the center of the reel could compromise the quality of the color.

Lab processing ensures quality and continuity between dye lots made with various cotton crops. Each color has a unique recipe that includes the particular dye colors and amounts, water amount and temperature, and dyeing time. Before the skeins are dyed, the lab dyes a few yards of each crop to ensure the result matches the color

card, and adjusts the recipe as needed. The comparison to the color card is made by both machine and human eye.

The dyed skeins are then mercerized in a caustic soda bath to modify the organic composition of the cotton. Mercerization makes the thread stronger and increases the sheen, or pearl, of the thread.

The cotton skeins are placed on arms and inserted into a fully contained unit known as a dyeing wardrobe. The liquid dye is shot onto the skeins in an automated process. Interestingly, black thread takes the longest to dye and spends a full eight hours in the dyeing wardrobe.

The dyed skeins are transferred onto drying arms and transported to dryers. The drying process is intentionally slow to maintain a high quality result. The ovens are maintained at a consis-



*A skilled professional loads and threads the thread into the head of the twisting machine.*

## Thread Tips

Protecting your thread collection is important. "With proper storage, cotton thread can last a lifetime. Store all thread away from direct sunlight and dust, and avoid extreme changes in temperature and humidity," says Miller. "If your thread becomes dry and brittle, apply a fine bead of silicone directly onto the spool to recondition the thread. Always test older thread before starting any project."

It's not unusual for quilters to blame the thread for two time-consuming challenges: thread breakage and shredding. Most of these issues can be avoided or solved with the proper combination of correct tension settings, bobbin thread weight, and needle selection.



Closeup of heart design by Redbird Quilt Co., free-motion quilted with Aurifil 28-wt. thread.



Wooly Wren pattern by Redbird Quilt Co. shown with Aurifil 50-wt. thread for the McTavishing quilting and 12-wt. thread on the wool appliqué.



Closeup of heart design by Redbird Quilt Co., free-motion quilted with Aurifil 80-wt. thread.



**Yvonne Fuchs**

**Fox Whole Cloth**

67.5 x 92 inches | 2019

Free-motion longarm and domestic machine quilting using Aurifil Forty3, a 40-weight, three-ply thread.

tently low temperature regardless of the thread's color or weight.

Aurifil's next step is the unwinding process where the thread is transferred from the skeins back onto reels, and then the winding process transfers the thread from the reels onto marketable spools. During this process, the thread is also passed through a bath of paraffin oil to lubricate the thread. This allows the thread to glide through a machine easily to minimize thread breakage while sewing. The paraffin oil also increases the sheen and further reduces lint.

The flanging process adds the thread base to the large spools. The labeling process affixes a printed label to the plastic base. Each label shows the following information: number of grams, "Made in Italy", dye lot number, color number, type of fiber, weight, and ply.

During the wrapping process each spool is shrink-wrapped and

barcoded. After a brief manual review for quality, the automated boxing process places either six large spools or ten small spools into each box. The boxes are then shipped around the globe.

Once the thread is out on the display shelves, the possibilities are endless. The most important consideration is the weight or thickness of the thread—the higher the weight number, the thinner the thread. "Thread weight is measured by the single strand. This means a two-ply thread results in a finer thread than a three-ply thread of a comparable weight," explains Miller. "If you need a stronger thread than a two ply, the alternatives are either a heavier weight thread, such as a 40 weight or even a 28 weight, or a three-ply thread in the same weight."

A two-ply, 50-weight thread works well for piecing as it allows



**Kathy Ross**  
**Greta**

13 x 13 inches | 2019  
For my daughter Millie, a total eco warrior. Free-motion embroidery on handmade recycled paper with Aurifil 12-, 28-, 40-, 50- and 80-weight cotton thread.



**Luke Haynes**  
**Alex Veronelli**

36 x 36 inches | 2012  
A Luke Haynes original created with Aurifil 50-weight thread.

the seams to press flat and minimizes thread buildup at multiple-seam intersections. It is strong enough to support pieced seams and allows you to wind a generous amount of thread onto the bobbin. This general-purpose weight can also be used for embroidery, appliqué, machine quilting, and finish work, either by hand or machine.

When it comes to machine quilting, whether by domestic machine or longarm, the need for speed is driving changes in the thread industry. Domestic machines run approximately 1,000 stitches per minute, and longarm machines can go twice that fast. It is imperative that the thread can withstand those speeds and not be prone to breakage. The go-to thread for most quilting is a 40-weight.

Today's thread selection is not limited to just cotton thread. Polyester thread and the newer trilobal

polyester thread, which is produced from a human-made, high tenacity, filament yarn, are perfect for quilting. Trilobal polyester thread has the sheen of rayon with the durability of polyester and can add another dimension to a quilt.

Monofilament thread is a single filament nylon thread, which is clear. Another clear alternative is monopoly thread, which is made from polyester. These clear threads add wonderful texture to a quilt and don't compete with the fabric or piecing. The invisible look of these threads is perfect for appliqué or for securing fabric layers prior to thread painting.

Hand-quilting thread has a glacé finish applied rather than being singed or lubricated. This helps reduce abrasions that might cause the thread to fray.

"Choosing a thread to complement a quilting project is like pairing

## Thread education program

Aurifil is pleased to share its thread education program, Aurifilosophy, with shops, organizations, and guilds around the globe. To learn more, visit [www.aurifil.com/aurifilosophy](http://www.aurifil.com/aurifilosophy), or contact Karen Miller, Aurifilosophy program coordinator, at [karen@aurifilusa.com](mailto:karen@aurifilusa.com)

hors d'oeuvres with wine—so many choices and so much fun," exclaims Miller. "The key is the weight."

If you want the quilting thread to literally disappear, you need to use a fine thread, such as a 50-weight or 80-weight thread, in a color that closely matches the background fabric. If the quilting will take center stage, try a 28-weight thread. If you really want to "wow" your audience, use a 12-weight cotton thread, which

see "Thread Tips" on page 38

# Perseverance conquers rejection, yields success

by Susan Lenz

Much has been written regarding rejections from juried shows and other artistic opportunities. Good advice suggests looking for calls for entry into which one can submit existing work. Such advice cautions against making a piece for a specific exhibition, because the odds of its acceptance are long and depend on variables that are beyond an artist's control.

When a rejection notice comes, one can find emotional support on social media groups and in print. Soothing comments about rejection reference a juror's personal preferences, the venue's physical limitations, and the need for the exhibition to appear as a cohesive whole. Yet, most of this counsel addresses a one-time rejection scenario.

This article goes beyond that single point. It details how an artistic journey is a series of steps forward and steps in reverse, and it starts with the unraveling of an ugly, tomato-red, polyester-knit dress that was never finished.

Sometime in the late 1960s or early 1970s, my mother knit the two, flat, rectangular-shaped dress pieces, a front and a back. She stitched them at the shoulder seams, but not up the two side seams. The "thing" was then unceremoniously shoved into a gray plastic bag and stashed out of sight for decades. In 2006, my mother solemnly presented the bag to me saying, "You'll know what to do with this." I could feel the pull of regret for the hours

she'd spent on what became dashed hopes. I didn't, however, have the slightest idea what I could do with the thing.

With no ideas for the panels, I unraveled them. After all, I don't knit. I don't crochet. I stitch. I had to figure out how to stitch yarn. I shoved several strands into my Bernina's cording foot and zigzag stitched over them until I had a nice ball of cording. Finally, an idea presented itself. I thought I would make a placemat similar to a braided rug. I coiled the end of my cording into a spiral and started zigzagging again. It was all going well until I reached the edge of my sewing machine base. My placemat started curling and quickly turned into a



**Wasted Words: War**

6 x 8 x 8 inches | 2009



**Black & White and Read All Over**

6 x 8 x 8 inches | 2020

bowl. The result was a lopsided fiber vessel called *You'll Know What To Do* (not shown). I entered it in the South Carolina State Fair's professional, fine art competition. It won \$300 and a blue ribbon in its category.

With this initial success, I decided to make more fiber vessels. I made dozens of them, perfecting my process as I worked. They became larger, stiffer, and symmetrical. I recognized their potential as functional containers when I read a call for entry for book arts. Soon, I was ripping and rolling pages of newspapers and encyclopedias. The resulting multilayered, stitched cubes and tied scrolls filled a gray fiber vessel. I called it *Some Things I'll Never Know* (not shown), a title that related to the first piece, and entered it into the book arts show. It was rejected, but the slides went to Lark Books. More than a year later, I learned that an image of that piece would be in *500 Handmade Books*, published by Lark in 2008.

The next spring, a curator from the Center for Book Arts in New York City called. He asked if the work in the Lark publication was available. Unfortunately, I had traded it for catering at an exhibition reception. I told him I could make something similar, and I made *Wasted Words: Global Warnings* and *Wasted Words: War*. They were both rejected.

I didn't give up. *Wasted Words: War* earned a \$500 prize at the South Carolina State Fair. *Wasted Words:*



*Susan Lenz's unending journey with fiber vessels started with You'll Know What To Do, a basket similar to these pieces.*

*Global Warnings* (not shown) was accepted into *Green: A Color and a Cause* at The Textile Museum (TTM) in Washington, D.C. Later, *Wasted Words: Global Warnings* was acquired for TTM's permanent collection. This was due to inclusion of another piece in SAQA's *Stories of Migration* exhibition at TTM and the networking that opportunity provided.

I wanted to make more conceptually charged 3D pieces, and in 2015 submitted an art residency proposal to several organizations. Most rejected the proposal, but PLAYA in the Oregon Outback offered me a month's residency. While there, I created dozens of new vessels, one which was later accepted into a juried show hosted by the National Basketry Organization. So many fiber vessels were stitched during my Oregon art residency that I entered the Philadelphia Museum of Art (PMA) Craft Show in the basketry category. The show accepted work from this series for four years, from 2016-19.

Most recently, a photo editor at *The New York Times* (NYT) found

the vessel images on the PMA Craft Show website. I nearly fell over when I opened the email, but was immediately befuddled by the message. She thought my fiber vessels were woven and would make a great do-it-yourself basket project using the pages of the newspaper. She provided a link to an earlier project, which had instructions to fold an envelope from a newspaper spread. It was apparent that my fiber vessels did not suit her needs, yet, this was *THE NEW YORK TIMES!* How could I simply decline this opportunity without at least trying to impress? I couldn't.

Inside of twenty-four hours, I transformed two copies of NYT's July 15, 2020, edition into a fiber vessel filled with layered-and-stitched cubes and rolled scrolls. I replied to the photo editor's request and explained that I couldn't create a super simple craft project, but that I had created *Black & White and Read All Over*. She was impressed with the attached images, but couldn't use them.

see "Art Talk" on page 37

# Attention to detail ensures efficient, safe shipping

by Allison Reker

Part of being a professional artist is having the follow-through needed to professionally ship your work. Not only does this important step ensure the safety of your art, it can make an impression on the recipient that may in turn impact how they handle your work.

The different options for packing and shipping can seem overwhelming at first, but there are basic guidelines to follow that make the process easier and help ensure that your piece arrives safely at its destination.

## Packing artwork

Choosing your box wisely is an important first step. The size of your package matters in terms of protecting your piece and managing your shipping costs. Your artwork should fit snugly inside your box without being either too cramped or having room to slide around. Either situation can result in your piece arriving with bent edges, creases, or other damage. Check out SAQA's video at [www.saq.com/packing](http://www.saq.com/packing) for guidelines on how to properly pack an art quilt.

Shipping companies and insurers may not be responsible for damage caused by poor packing. Make sure you choose a box that is at least sturdy enough to handle some impact from being dropped, bumped, or piled with other packages. You may need something even sturdier if your artwork has fragile components or if the box needs to be used more than once.

When you ship to a buyer or collector, your box will need to be strong enough to make one trip. However, when you ship to an exhibition, speak with the person who manages the artwork. Ask if your box will be used to ship your piece between venues for the duration of the exhibition, or if it will be kept and used to return your artwork once the exhibition has ended. If the answer to

either of these questions is yes, a sturdier box with adequate padding inside may be necessary.

In most cases, SAQA Global Exhibitions does not reuse your shipping box for either purpose. The box and any of the packaging it contains will not be sent back to you. There is no need to overspend on a box that will only be used once, and a larger box may cost more to ship regardless of weight. Note: SAQA regional exhibitions may handle packing materials differently, so ask each time you take part in a regional exhibition.

Once your box has been packed for shipping, it is equally important to clearly mark it. This helps locate your shipping box if it gets lost or misdirected. While it's great to use recycled boxes to save money or to have a smaller environmental impact, make sure that your package stands out. Lost packages have been quickly found in warehouses, trucks, and on video feeds when their exteriors are visually distinctive, such as being marked with brightly colored tape or large, bold lettering.

## International shipping

Choose your carrier with care too, particularly if you have a tight deadline to deliver your work. While the local postal service generally costs less and has fewer problems with customs, during the COVID pandemic we saw that the United States Postal Service (USPS) was overwhelmed and could not be relied on to quickly move mail.

International shipping has more rules and regulations to follow. Some countries have restrictions for the maximum length and girth of packages, which may dictate whether your quilt needs to be rolled or folded. Look up these restrictions before you choose your box and pack up your quilt.



Regardless of size, expect to pay more to ship your box internationally, but don't be tempted to cut corners or break laws to save money. When shipping to the United States, no duty is charged on artwork. When shipping internationally, you must properly identify and declare the actual market value of your artwork on all customs declaration forms. Declaring less than the full market value may result in fines, seizure of your artwork, or other penalties imposed by customs officials in the importing or exporting countries. Non-U.S. SAQA members who ship their artwork to the United States for a SAQA Global Exhibition may receive reimbursement for a portion of their shipping expenses by filling out and submitting the form at [www.saqa.com/reimbursement](http://www.saqa.com/reimbursement).

Avoid the temptation to try to "trick" customs by under-declaring the value of your art or labeling it as fabric samples or cloth. Doing this may actually trigger customs being charged. However, also know that even if you fill out your forms correctly, you may still be charged customs fees based on the whims of the specific customs agent who handles your package. When SAQA returns your artwork at the end of a global exhibition, the full market value of each work will be declared. Fewer issues arise with return shipping when the forms are completed correctly for the original shipment. Properly declaring your artwork helps to protect it and is one of the expenses of being a professional artist.

Carefully research and follow local customs laws and regulations for the countries that you send work to and from. Before shipping any piece of art, check to make sure that every material used, including embedded or attached objects, is permitted to be shipped according to the rules of both

your carrier and the customs regulations of both countries. Failure to do so may result in your artwork being seized or possibly even destroyed.

When shipping entire exhibitions or more expensive works for temporary display, you may wish to consider using an ATA Carnet, which is a customs and temporary export-import document, or hiring a broker who handles temporary import bonds. These options add expense, but you won't be surprised with large customs fees. A broker can

“Your artwork should fit snugly inside your box without being either too cramped or having room to slide around.”

also help with any issues that may arise along the way.

When shipping from the United States to another country, you are required to file an Electronic Export Information (EEI) form with the U.S. Census Bureau prior to shipping if your artwork is valued at \$2,500 or more. You are also required to file an EEI if you are returning artwork of the same value from the United States to locations overseas. All EEI information is provided to the U.S. Census Bureau and is used for export compliance and governmental reporting. This does not apply for shipping to Canada.

This is an instance where choosing the right carrier can make a big difference. The USPS will not file an EEI for you, and you will therefore need to take care of this yourself. FedEx will permit you to file through your online account for a minimal fee.

### Find your fit

Do your research to see what each carrier offers. While it's true that you get what you pay for, discounts are possible. Many postal services, FedEx, and UPS offer significant savings if you open an online account and create your own labels.

Regarding price, the size of your package matters more than how much it weighs. Most

“ Properly declaring your artwork helps to protect it and is one of the expenses of being a professional artist. ”

shippers use dimensional weight, or DIM weight. This means you may be charged based on the dimensions of your box rather than its weight. For example, a one-pound quilt can cost the same as a thirteen-pound quilt if it is shipped in a four-foot-long tube. Depending on how large your piece is, you may want to determine if it can be safely folded instead of rolled. Though the care of your quilt takes precedence, this is where you can save money if you package your art quilt properly.

When shipping with FedEx and UPS, you can also save money by dropping your package off at a business location instead of having it picked up at your residence. It doesn't hurt to call and ask if they are willing to give you a better rate.

### Signature & insurance

Signature service can cost up to \$5 more, but it can be well worth it to protect your artwork. Without signature required, UPS and FedEx will leave your artwork on the doorstep of a residence regardless of the weather, though they will not leave it at a business address unless someone is present. USPS will simply leave your artwork even if no one is there, whether it's on a front porch or outside of a

business in a busy shopping center. It is always best to coordinate with the recipient when deciding on the best carrier and shipping options to protect your art.

Having the right insurance is also important, but it is possible to overinsure. If you regularly ship to exhibitions or collectors, find out if your homeowners or business insurance will cover your work in transit, or if they offer a policy that will. If your work is already covered, there is no reason to buy separate, one-time insurance through your carrier. You won't receive a double payout if anything happens. Also, make sure that you get what you pay for. It is a common misperception that FedEx offers insurance on packages. FedEx will ask you to declare a carriage value, which increases your shipping costs and limits their liability, but it is specifically not insurance. Some carriers will allow you to declare a higher carriage value and charge you accordingly, but limit their liability to much less. Carriers may also have clauses which exempt them from liability for certain classes of items, including artwork. Researching your carrier's policy on insurance and liability can save you significant heartbreak and frustration if your artwork is lost.

### Conclusion

While mailing your artwork always involves some risk, there are simple steps to greatly minimize it. Find out what kind of packaging will best protect your piece and whether it will be used only once or multiple times over several years. Make it stand out visually, and label it properly. Research important details, including how various postal carriers will handle your package, what types of insurance coverage are available, and any customs or postal regulations that directly affect your shipment.

Still not sure about the best way to send your artwork for a SAQA global exhibition? Contact Bill Reker, director of SAQA Global Exhibitions, at [exhibitions@saqa.com](mailto:exhibitions@saqa.com), and he will be happy to guide you through the process. ■

*Allison Reker is SAQA's membership coordinator and catalog editor. She has authored five books of fiction and is a freelance editor for various publications. She resides in Beavercreek, Ohio.*

# Which quilt batting will stand the test of time?

by Diane Howell

Inside every quilt is a mystery, an unseen middle layer transformed by stitch into texture. This layer of non-woven fiber is batting. It is used in almost every traditional or art quilt, and is available in a huge variety of materials, such as cotton, wool, bamboo, silk, or polyester.

What do we really know about batting? A definitive third-party study on batting's archival qualities is still to be written. Collectors as well as artists should be concerned about whether battings will stand the test of time, but is an informed decision possible?

Common sense, manufacturers' notes, and conservators' experiences guide today's wisest choices. The experts agree that less is more when selecting a batt with archival properties. In other words, avoid products with resins; instead choose products produced through thermal bonding or needle punching.

One dependable source in this matter is Spicer Art Conservation, which publishes an online journal, *Inside the Conservator's Studio*. In a 2013 column on storage materials, it offered straightforward advice: "Look for polyester needle-punched batting. This batting is formed mechanically by fiber entanglement using barbed needles. The other commonly found battings are made with resins that bond the fibers. The resins have been found to yellow and then can transfer onto artifacts."

Another respected source is the *Conserve O Gram* from the National Park Service. Its frame of reference regarding fabrics also is on storage



## SAQA members' favorite batting choices include wool, polyester

It's not a quilt until it's quilted, and that step requires careful selection of a batt. What are SAQA members' go-to choices?

The answer depends on the desired look and function of the piece. Lines such as Quilters Dream, Hobbs Bonded Fibers, The Warm Company, and Winline Textiles offer a wide range of material choices. But a quick poll made it clear that SAQA members have their favorites.

### Cotton

Molly Flowers embraces cotton. She likes The Warm Company's Warm & Natural cotton batting, although she has had success with low-loft polyester batting. Maggie Vanderweit chooses Warm & White from the same manufacturer because she finds that it has a nice texture and holds its shape well.

Jane Londerville looks to the world of machine-embroidery stabilizers for her favorite, Battilizer, a cotton-poly blend made by Hoop Sisters. She likes it for wall hangings because it "lies perfectly flat on the wall."

And Linda Syverson Guild uses cotton flannel for batting if her piece has multiple layers.

### Wool

A large number of SAQA members are in love with wool batts, with many citing selections from Matilda's Own and Hobbs Tuscany product lines as their favorites.

Jeanne Marklin usually buys Australian-made Matilda's Own because it shows off quilting stitches and doesn't hold creases if it gets folded. Sarah Ann Smith used to use Matilda's Own wool and poly blend batting until she could no longer source that particular batt within the United States. She now uses two layers of batting, Quilters Dream Cotton Request batting on the bottom and Hobbs Tuscany 100% Wool Batting on top.

Kathy Stuart employs a similar combination for whole-cloth quilts with a layer of Hobbs Heirloom Premium 80/20 Cotton Blend on the bottom and a layer of Hobbs wool batting on top. "[This] makes my feathers look like I've done trapunto without all the

work (best cheater wins!). When I'm doing art quilts, I use a layer of felt and then wool on top. Again, I like to make my quilting show and the wool does this."

For her whole-cloth quilts, Jenny K. Lyon chooses Quilters Select wool batting. Donna Deaver uses a wool or a wool-blend batt too. "I roll my quilts when shipping, but if they come back folded, I like that they don't crease. The brand depends on how much loft I want for the piece. However, I do sometimes double the batting."

Karol Kusmaul also uses wool in her art quilts to gain loft and to show off machine quilting, although she sometimes uses a cotton batt backed by felt.

Katherine Reader is new to wool, and appreciates its resiliency. "Friends also say it makes my quilts look like they have more depth." Kay Liggett has been using Hobbs wool batting for over a decade, and has never been disappointed. She finds that any creasing is quickly erased. "I can press out the folds with a steam iron, iron it flatter while I quilt it, and block it like a sweater when I'm done quilting. It's warm, and it has never bearded on my quilts. It will probably outlast most of the cotton tops."

### Bamboo

For quilts that will be used and washed, Bev Haring selects Winline Textiles's bamboo batting, although she uses polyesters or other stiff materials for heavily stitched wall quilts, because she finds that they hold their shape better.

Linda Anderson and your author love Winline's bamboo batting because it is thin, lightweight, and easy to work with. I love the look of this drapery batting in all types of quilts.

### Felt

Georgia French and Terry Howard Grant are devotees of polyester felt made from recycled plastic bottles. "It is firm but thin and gives a lot of definition while keeping the piece flat and light. On my last quilt, I used two layers. It quilted like a dream and the stitch definition is a major feature of the work," says French.

Grant notes that the felt comes in two weights. "I like the slightly thicker one. I always use only one layer and it is lovely to stitch."

Sue Siefkin uses polyester felt for those reasons plus one more: "Because I like to skip rod pockets and use heavy-duty Velcro to hang my quilts to the rods, I make sure the hook side of Velcro will grab the eco felt backing firmly before buying it."

Polyester felt is sold under various names. Amanda Snavelly usually opts for a premium felt in medium grey. "I like the premium as I don't feel it stretches as much as some others. Then I use SpunFab fusible to fuse my fabric layers to it."

Ginni Fleck uses Kunin Felt, a division of Foss Performance Materials. It is also made from recycled plastic, and has a premium weight, Kunin Eco-fi Plus Premium Felt.

Susan Callahan opts for acrylic felt. "It is super thin, very flat, and stitches [by hand or machine] beautifully. It never beards."

### Others

A mix of human-made and natural products fall into this section.

Katharine Ward selects Hobbs Thermore polyester batt because "it lies flat, is very lightweight, and is easy to maneuver through a sewing machine." Margaret Abramshe chooses a fusible batt, Pellon Thermolam Plus (product number TP971F), because it is thin, light, and "stays super flat even with dense quilting."

Cara Feenstra Gulati's favorite batting is Quilters Dream Puff, a polyester batt with good drape. "It's lofty enough to create some lift."

Finally, there is silk batting to consider. Wendy Greber uses it for wall quilts. Candace Hackett Shively uses Quilters Dream Orient, made from silk, bamboo, botanic Tencel™, and cotton. "I love how fluid it is."

More information about battings can be found on manufacturers' websites.

— Diane Howell

and display. The August 2004 issue states that the “most common and cost-effective natural textiles used in museums are unbleached linen and cotton. Reliable synthetic products include polyester, poly-cotton blends, and acrylic felts.” The flyer cautions against using any fiber with a finishing treatment, such as fire retardant, formaldehyde, phosphate, adhesive, resin, or dye, as these “can emit harmful degradation products similar to those found in plastics.”

Naturally, this advice must be applied for use inside a quilt. To ensure stability over the long term requires evaluation of all of the materials that go into an artwork. Every batt has varying qualities, such as loft and source material, that affect the look and feel of a finished piece.

LuAnn Sarr, owner of Utah-based Winline Textiles, finds batting to be the second most important element in a quilt, “more critical than thread, fabric, and final quilting, and it isn’t



even seen,” she says on her website. “All of our battings are made of hand-selected fibers from certified vendors and adhere to the strictest standards of quality—limiting the use of chemical binders, bleaches, and fillers. Our battings are all needle-punched with scrim to give them added strength and durability,” the Winline site notes. It also offers detailed descriptions of batts of every stripe, from cotton to bamboo to silk.

Another manufacturer that takes great care to offer batts with archival

traits is Fibrix, maker of Mountain Mist products. “We recommend staying away from quilt battings that have resin bonding. The chemicals that make up the resins can contain a higher degree of acid that might be harmful long term,” says Linda Pumphrey, senior account executive for Mountain Mist products. “All the Mountain Mist battings are resin-free, which make them safe for archival purposes. Mountain Mist Quality and Quilt-Light Polyester battings are thermal bonded, and Mountain

## Overview of Batting Materials

**Cotton**—Cotton is an all natural and breathable fiber that is most commonly found in quilts. It wears well with age and washing. Conventionally grown cotton takes a lot of fertilizers, pesticides, and bleaches before it reaches the quilter.

**Polyester**—Using polycarbon fibers allows any number of loft thicknesses and sizes. This batting is lightweight, warm, non-allergenic, doesn’t shrink, and is completely machine washable. It doesn’t breathe as well as natural fibers and has a greater tendency to beard. It is a nonrenewable, petroleum-based product.

**Cotton/Polyester blends**—Blending these two materials adds loft to the batt while maintaining some of the good qualities of the cotton, including breathability and softness.

**Wool**—Wool batting is lightweight, warm, breathable, and naturally flame resistant. It needs careful washing and drying to keep from shrinking. It can cause allergic reactions and must be protected from moths and other insects.

**Bamboo**—Bamboo and bamboo blend batting are fairly new. Bamboo is a highly sustainable plant that needs no chemical fertilizers or pesticides to grow, is breathable like cotton, has minimal shrinkage, contains no bleaches, glues, or binders, and is naturally antibacterial.

**Silk**—Silk batting is lightweight and thin, yet still warm and breathable with a beautiful drape. It is a good choice for quilted clothing. It must be washed carefully as it shrinks a good deal.



Mist Ultra Fine polyester batting is needle-punched. The brand's 100 percent cotton battings, White Rose and Cream Rose, are needle punched, (giving) them qualities suitable for archival purposes. The White Rose is a purified cotton [that removes] all the natural cotton oils, making it our top recommendation," Pumphrey says. Mountain Mist battings do not use scrim.

Hobbs Bonded Fibers also makes several batts with archival properties. Options include 100 percent cotton, needle-punched batts sold under the company's Heirloom and Tuscany trademarks. The company offers bleached and unbleached options. For those who prefer a wool batting, the Heirloom Wool Batting is recommended for having the finest super-washed wool available since the wool

undergoes a process that smooths the fibrous scales. Hobbs says that this batting resists migration and beard-ing—the latter often being a problem with wool batts.

If you are a quilt artist who wants to create permanent works of art, consider the archival properties of your battings. As for art quilt collectors, it would be prudent to inquire about the battings used by artists whose quilts catch your eye. ■

*Diane Howell resides in Chandler, Arizona, and is editor of the SAQA Journal. A former business and arts reporter, she founded the annual Art Quilts exhibition in Chandler.*

*Ed. Note: A version of this article originally appeared in Issue 15 of Art Quilt Quarterly.*

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## Art Talk

from page 29

That's not the end of the story. While stitching that piece, I remembered SAQA's call for a special exhibition at *Intersect Chicago* (formerly Sculptural Objects Functional Art, or SOFA). I realized I suddenly had more than one piece that qualified. My *NYT* project was rejected, but *Wasted Words: War* was juried in to what became a virtual event. The key is that it would not have mattered if both of them had been rejected. These fiber vessels have taken me on an amazing journey that will continue as long as I never give up.

It is my hope that other artists persevere through rejection and remain open to all the possibilities. ■

*Susan Lenz is a SAQA Juried Artist member who lives in Columbia, South Carolina.*



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## Thread tips

from page 27

is the thickest thread you can get through a machine needle. The quilting will be very visible.

“When it comes to thread painting, the heavier weight threads allow you to achieve a more distinct look with less effort. I’m partial to 12-weight and 28-weight cotton and 12-weight wool threads. Be sure to use a 90/14 or 100/16 topstitch needle for less thread breakage,” says Miller. “If the goal is to highlight the details or accent slight color variations, consider going with one of the finer threads. They allow you to fine tune the color and image details. You may even want to try using two colors of thread at once through the needle.”

Don’t be afraid to experiment with thread. Play with different weights and have fun. Just be careful—you may find you have a new addiction. ■



### Lorraine Turner *Clustered in the Cliffs*

20 x 24 inches | 2020

Raw appliqué, silk hand embroidery, and custom lace made with Aurifil 12- and 50-weight threads stitched over water-soluble stabilizer. Embellishments and thread painting stitched with Aurifil 12- and 50-weight thread.

*ZJ Humbach is a freelance writer, quilting and sewing teacher, and professional longarm quilter. She owns and operates Dream Stitcher Quilt Studio in Thornton, Colorado.*



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## Willy Doreleijers

from page 23

spent in the studio as well. When she travels, it's often with an artistic purpose in mind—to visit museums, explore an urban environment, or hear music.

Doreleijers prefers to call her creations textile works rather than art quilts, because she believes quilts are “all too often wrongly considered as a craft.” She exhibits her work internationally in diverse venues, including the Menier Gallery in London and sites that welcome SAQA Global Exhibitions.

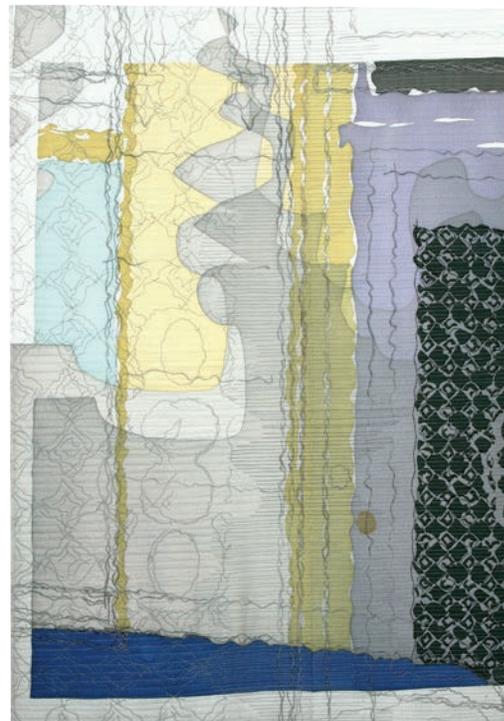
Doreleijers believes that the presentation surrounding works of art can be just as important as the art itself. “The space, the surrounding colors, the mutual distance and sophisticated lighting partly determine the experience.” These factors can give an extra dimension to the artwork, she adds.

For art quilters just starting out, Doreleijers thinks that the artist's feelings and insights are the most important thing to focus on. “Don't worry too much about artistic movements or directions.” Assess your own work to make sure you are saying what you intend to say with your art, know the strengths and weaknesses of your work, and try to be original and genuine, she says.

Going forward, Doreleijers expects to continue to explore and develop her unique approach to graphic design in textiles. “In the artistic field, the end is still not in sight.”

See more of Doreleijers's work at [www.willydoreleijers.nl](http://www.willydoreleijers.nl). ■

*Cindy Grisdela is a SAQA Juried Artist who resides in Reston, Virginia. View her work at [www.cindygrisdela.com](http://www.cindygrisdela.com).*



**Frontdoor**

42 x 29.5 inches | 2013



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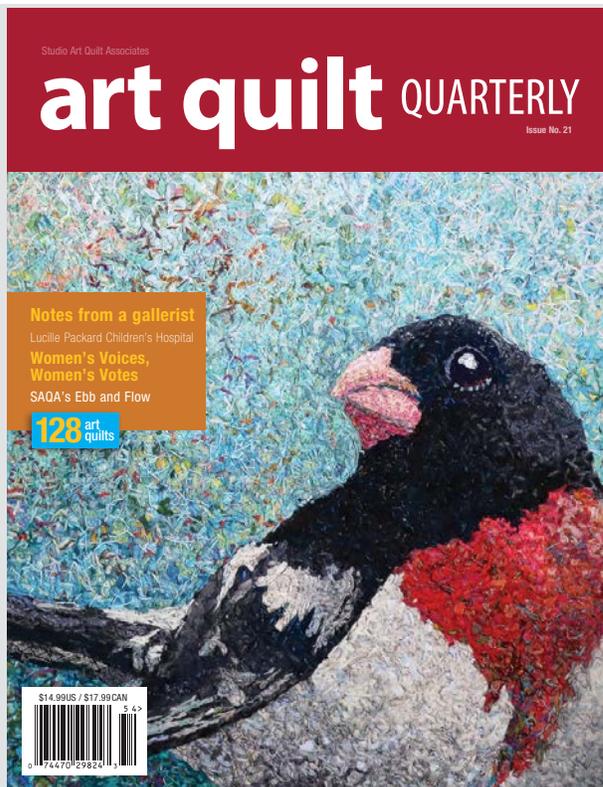
Free for SAQA members

Register in January at [saqa.com/seminar](http://saqa.com/seminar)

Marty Moon and Butch Davies became involved with SAQA attending regional meetings, annual conferences, workshops, and exhibits. They have purchased quilts from SAQA benefit auctions and at annual conferences. They started contributing to help SAQA more than a decade ago. They have committed a bequest to SAQA in their estate plans. Giving to SAQA helps others expand their interest in quilting and in SAQA's mission. Marty and Butch invite you to join them in their support of SAQA.



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# In Memoriam

## Katharine Stubbs Ward

Katharine Stubbs Ward, a longtime SAQA member and an icon in the quilt world, recently passed away. She was active in the certified judge program and for the past four decades was a board member of various quilt groups. Kathy was the founder and president of the Palm Beach County Quilters' Guild. She also started an entry-level art quilt group, Out-of-the-Box Design Group, in south Florida, which won many awards in group competition at AQS QuiltWeek in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Her dedication to art and encouraging others to succeed was inspiring to everyone who knew her. She will be greatly missed and SAQA extends its sympathy to her friends and family.

## C. Jackson Brockette

C. Jackson "Jack" Brockette, 82, of Dallas, Texas, passed away in July. He was a renowned, award-winning fiber artist. As a child, his mother took him to quilting bees, where from underneath the quilt he pushed the needle back to her. Because of those sessions, he "knew early on that I wanted to spend my life in the arts," he stated in an online biography.

He attended Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas, on a drum major scholarship and triple majored in business, art, and K-12 education. He also completed graduate work at several universities, including Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, Rhode Island, where he earned a Master of Education degree with a major in weaving and textiles.

In 1989, he learned to quilt. He later became known for three-layer transparent quilts made of hand-dyed and machine-embroidered silk organza, an outgrowth of his interest in pojagi. He also made embroidered and beaded jackets and coats.

SAQA extends its condolences to Jack's family and friends. In memory of Jack's life, donations may be made to Creative Arts Center in Dallas, Texas.

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*Conversations with the Boss*, detail by Kerri Green

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Christine Aaron, *Vestiges II*, 2019

## Member Survey

from page 16

Members of the survey team presented a comprehensive report to the board and Leadership Roundtable. The report included notable results, cross-referenced insights, comparisons to the last survey, and representative quotations from more than 9,000 short-answer responses. The board discussed insights and thought about how we can use the results to help SAQA continue to grow and focus on our mission and vision.

Committee chairs will have an opportunity to review the results and talk with the survey team about how they can be used to generate new ideas, help improve current projects, and dream big for the future. Committees will regularly report back to the board about how the survey results will make their way into actual projects and programs. We also expect to find some areas for further research. It's possible we'll develop focus groups or smaller surveys on specific subjects.

Desi Vaughn, SAQA's regional reps coordinator, will work with reps on using survey results that may be helpful in their unique regions. In fact, we can even filter the results to show data from specific regions.

Toward the end of 2020, the survey team will release a *Member Report*. In early 2021, we will include an additional article in the *SAQA Journal* that will provide a concise review of the results and offer insight into possible projects and developments created as a response to the survey data. ■

*Deborah Boschert is president of the SAQA Board of Directors. She resides in Lewisville, Texas.*

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# Mother Nature

by N.K. Quan

**Elizabeth Michellod-Dutheil**  
***Bouquets Fleuris (Flower***  
***Bouquets)***

35.5 x 39.25 inches | 2011



A tough breed of Alpine cow—known for its vigor and ferociousness—is the inspiration for Elizabeth Michellod-Dutheil's quilt, *Bouquets Fleuris (Flower Bouquets)*, fourth in her five-piece *Queens of the Valais, Hérens Breed* series.

Hérens cows live in the mountainous cantons of Valais, Switzerland, and have traditionally been bred by the region's families. When she married, Michellod-Dutheil embraced her husband's passion for the breed. The animals fascinated her, and she began to photograph them and draw their portraits.

"In my pencil drawings, I'm focusing on accurately depicting those elements of each cow—the flare of their noses, the brush of their fur, the light in their eyes—that make them unique."

In this quilt, she combines highly detailed drawing with the color and texture of fabric. Red, her favorite color, borders the central image, creating a

sense of power and even danger.

Part of the tradition of owning a Hérens cow is the competition for the title of queen. The cows instinctively challenge each other, and each May competitions are held to crown a queen. The cows climb within their group hierarchy by fighting, but they are never severely injured as they back off when they lose.

"My art is inspired by Mother Nature, which provides the materials necessary for my creations, whether in raw form—such as twigs, bark and mushrooms—or in a transformed state, such as fibers and fabrics."

A self-taught quilter, Michellod-Dutheil learned basics by following traditional patchwork designs. At the same time, she felt an urge to create her own interpretations by experimenting with shapes and colors. To boost her creative and technical skills, she entered juried exhibitions, an important step in

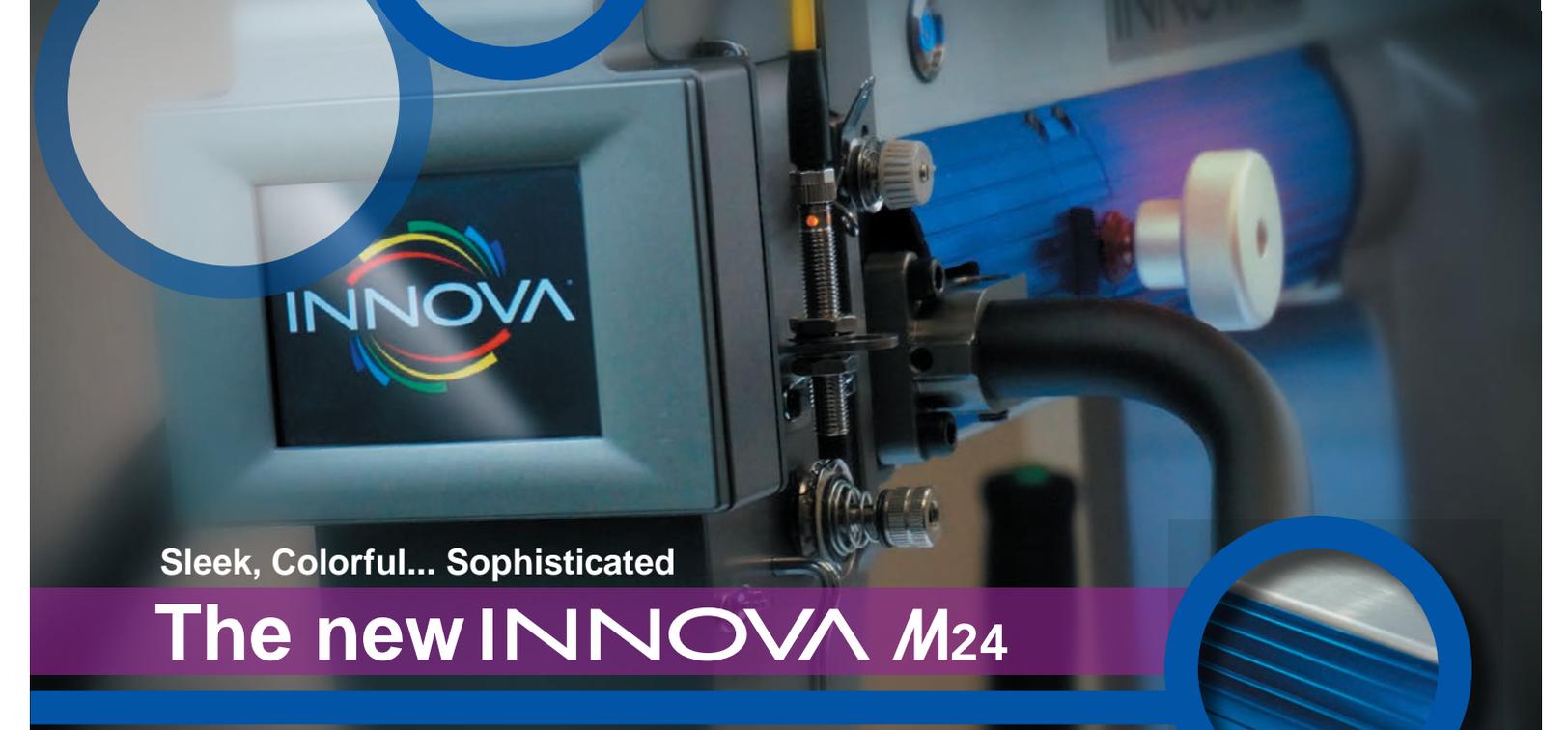
the evolution of her work.

"By entering juried shows, I gave myself a goal, reached a wider audience, and most of all, benefited from constructive criticism of my work."

Recently, she has experimented with reusing vintage linen, cotton, and percale sheets, items that are made with different weaving and textures from the fabrics found in stores today. "These old sheets have a history, a life, and have fulfilled a certain role for decades. I like the idea that my artistic approach contributes to increasing their lifespan and acquiring a certain visibility by transforming them into a work of art for [future] generations."

Elizabeth Michellod-Dutheil, a SAQA Juried Artist, is an award-winning, multidisciplinary artist living in Valais, Switzerland. ■

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



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