

SAQATM JOURNAL

STUDIO ART QUILT ASSOCIATES

2023 | Volume 33, No. 4



INSIDE: MEET BARBARA BUSHEY • KEEP YOUR WEBSITE UP TO DATE • TRACK IN-STUDIO ACTIVITY • PART 3: FROM CHAOS TO CREATIVITY • ONLY ART QUILTS IN THE BUILDING • JURIED ARTIST SHOWCASE • MEMBERS GALLERY: IN THE MIX • COLOR IN CONTEXT: RED • SAQA AWARD WINNER

IN THIS ISSUE

FEATURE ARTICLES:

Part 3: From chaos to creativity	5
SAQA Trunk Show outreach	10
Featured Artist: Barbara Bushey	16
Professionally track studio activity	22
Keep your website updated	26
Only art quilts in the building.....	38

COLUMNS:

Editor's Notes.....	3
Thoughts from the president.....	4

GALLERIES:

Juried Artist Showcase.....	14
SAQA Global Exhibitions: <i>Color in Context: Red</i>	20
Member Gallery: <i>In the Mix</i>	28



From *Color in Context: Red*

SAQA NEWS

SAQA Award at <i>Interpretations 2023</i>	9
In memoriam: Beth Blankenship, Cindy Friedman, Marlene Glickman, Salli McQuaid, Barbara Naiditch, and Esta Rubin.....	37

ON THE COVER:

Chiaki Doshō
Cocoon / Led
40 x 28 inches | 102 x 71 cm | 2022

Photo by Akinori Miyashita

QUICK NOTES

To find out more about SAQA, contact Martha Sielman, executive director, by phone at 860.530.1551, or by email at execdirector@saqa.com.

Explore varied resources on our website at www.saqa.com. Annual membership for U.S. and international members, listed in USD, is \$90.

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.

The *SAQA Journal* is published four times a year. To submit articles or story ideas, contact Diane Howell, *SAQA Journal* editor, at editor@saqa.com. Review submission guidelines at www.saqa.com/journal-submit.

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This quarterly publication gets a scoop!

by Diane Howell

I have been an editor, copy editor, reporter and proofreader for several decades. Along the way, I've met a host of people, including notables such as Glen Campbell to Barry Goldwater—those two at their Phoenix residences.

And now I have come full circle, working at a magazine that combines my love of editing with my personal passion for art quilts, sparked in fourth grade when my grandmother taught me to piece. She loved color!

But I do not expect scoops, stories that other publications don't have. That's not the nature of a quarterly publication. Original stories on technology, artists, and trends? Yes. But a scoop? It doesn't happen.

That is until I recently watched Season 3, Episode 9 of *Only Murders in the Building* on Hulu, starring Steve Martin, Martin Short and Selena Gomez. In one scene, a fabric portrait of guest star Paul Rudd splashed onto the screen! It was a screwball moment that made me laugh and reflect on how our art form had just won popular

placement. My excitement was palpable, but fleeting. I was so engrossed in the show's plot that I didn't think about the art quilt again until Virginia Greaves mentioned it on Facebook. Consensus was that no one knew who made it. One person guessed that it might have been Luke Haynes, and I was sure that he had to be the maker. So I asked him, only to be told, "I wish!" (We will most likely hear from Haynes later about other pursuits, so still a positive email exchange.)

Finding out who made the quilt became my obsession for about a week. I reached out and waited. Reached out to someone else and waited. And then, with a wow factor I haven't felt in years, I not only had my answer but a scoop.

You'll have to turn to page 38 to read all about it. You didn't think I'd tell you here, did you?

Whew!

What else can I tell you? This issue has plenty of information on making professional choices in your art practice.

Clara Nartey gives you steps to update your website on page 26. Make sure viewers know you are an active artist when they make their way to your site by listing new events, artwork, and exhibitions.

Kestrel Michaud guides you through tracking your time and supplies as you make art, a task that allows you to accurately know the value of everything, including yourself. See page 22 for a detailed description.

Lilo Bowman presents Part 3 of *From Chaos to Creativity* on page 5, where she has suggestions for creating workstations and storage areas. And Cindy Grisdelo introduces us to featured artist Barbara Bushey, whose love of water has resulted in richly layered work that beckons contemplation. Learn about this fascinating artist on page 16.

Also check out our galleries: Member Gallery, Juried Artist Showcase, and our SAQA Global Exhibition preview, which this issue features *Color in Context: Red*.

Enjoy the read! ■

Volunteer your time, talents to receive rewarding benefits

by Mel Beach

As a volunteer-driven organization, SAQA depends on and appreciates our amazing volunteers—and our volunteers benefit from their SAQA involvement at the regional and global levels. When I requested members to share their volunteer experiences, I was overwhelmed by uplifting stories.

Quite a few members expressed how their volunteer involvement advances their own artistic and professional development. Sarah Ann Smith says it is important to “surround yourself with people who will lift you higher,” which is her experience serving on the Exhibitions Committee. Sarah enjoys “learning about parts of SAQA and the art world I’d not have known about otherwise.” Zara Zannettino shared how helping to hang global and regional exhibitions helps her “better appreciate the quality finish of the artwork accepted” and how that awareness prompts her to improve her own finished pieces. Kathy Grady’s involvement with her regional exhibitions taught her about “planning, organizing, and publicizing exhibitions.” Cindy Grisdela volunteered to set up a local artists panel for a SAQA conference where she presented her work that turned into an opportunity to write her first book. Joyce Ferrie says that volunteering boosts confidence

in herself as she grows computer and organizational skills.

Many members said they forged invaluable connections through SAQA volunteer opportunities. When Kathleen Grady moved cross-country to California, she joined the regional exhibitions committee and felt at home thanks to the community she found within SAQA. While serving as regional rep for the Massachusetts & Rhode Island region, Rebecca Szetela scheduled Betty Hahn for a regional presentation, which led to friendship and later an informal mentorship. As a lifelong artist, Rebecca says her involvement with SAQA was the “first time I felt such camaraderie with other artists.” As a result of volunteering with her regional Exhibitions Committee, Rosanna Lynne Welter met many talented people, including one who recommended her for a private art quilt group that exhibits across the Southwest. According to Rosanna: “If you don’t put yourself out there, you’re never going to make any connections to the broader quilting world.”

Volunteering with regional shows introduced Jean McCreary to amazing members within the New Jersey & New York region while Jenny Balou has become familiar with media representatives where an exhibition has been installed. Susan Callahan’s



introduction to artists around the world provided her the opportunity to form 20 Perspectives, an international textile artist group.

Here are a few more comments from members on the impact of volunteering. Cornelia Dremel says, “In short: it makes me happy!” Joyce Ferrie says, “The more I volunteer, the more contacts I make, the more fun I have, the more my work grows, the more I want to grow, and the more I want to continue to give. It has re-energized my zest for life and learning.”

Carol Kimble also enjoys being a working part of this very special organization: “Volunteer! Participate! Enjoy! It will change your life and your art!”

I hope these testimonials inspire you to share your time and talents with SAQA. Visit www.saqa.com/volunteer to learn about current volunteer openings within the Development, Education, Finance Advisory, and Special Events committees.

Contact your regional rep(s) to inquire about regional volunteer opportunities. You also can reach out via email to volunteer@saqa.com. ■

PART 3

From chaos to creativity

ASSESS YOUR WORKSPACE AMID DOWNSIZED SUPPLIES

by Lilo Bowman

If you have worked for decades in the same studio, now is the perfect time to consider if it still meets your needs. As your work has evolved, so have your requirements. At this stage in the organizing journey, having downsized your supply inventory to goods that are a priority for your needs, evaluate the arrangement of the space. Consider these questions as they relate to your current needs going forward:

- Does current workstation placement work with my creative flow? Am I spending more time walking back and forth across the room when several workstations scattered throughout might be a better solution?
- Am I using all workstations, or can one be eliminated to provide more space?
- Does anything, such as sunlight streaming onto my sewing area, bother me?
- Does the current design wall provide enough area as my work has increased in size? Do I have a wall that can accommodate larger art quilts?
- Should the collection of books move to the living room, where I prefer to read, thereby opening additional storage space in the studio?
- Would wheels on my workstations allow me to adapt arrangements depending on my needs? Would shelving above workstations



Fabric stored on shelving that climbs to the ceiling allows multiple worktables to be placed around the perimeter of the studio.

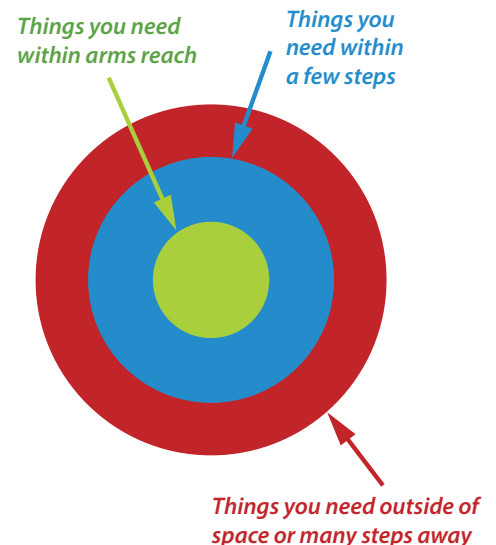
eliminate the need for items to crowd my worktables?

The core work elements of any studio are called task stations or workstations. Workstations, which include sewing, pressing, painting, cutting, designing, etc. should work in harmony. The ideal movement from one to another should be done in “work triangle”—a concept from the kitchen design world that is the most efficient flow. A design wall factors into this equation, but as it is vertical, it doesn’t take up floor space.

The Circle of Reach

A workstation needs to be a place that you have use of, not a convenient dumping ground for unrelated things. Whether your space allows for miles of tabletop, is nestled under a staircase, or inside a closet, when

seated at the worktable, you should be at the center of several radiating rings. The most frequently used items should be organized within arm’s reach on the right (vice versa for us lefties!). Less frequently used items (like batting books, camera





A closet filled with sorted and labeled thread collections makes finding and returning them simple.

equipment, or finished works) are a step or two away or in another area. The idea is to think about what directly relates to a task, then radiate outward or downward, based on the item's usage at that specific workstation. At a work desk, the most often used items, such as writing tools, chargers, and notebooks, would live in the top drawers. Staplers, tape, rubber bands, stamps, and envelopes would be placed in lower drawers. Manuals and other less frequently needed items would be relegated to the bottom drawers. There are occasions when you discover a need based on your personal habits. If you find yourself constantly removing pencils and pens from the cutting table, think about adding a place to include and hold pencils and pens beside rotary cutters, scissors, rulers, etc. Batting and books, on the other hand, may only be needed on occasion, so they can live further away.

The more you focus on having only the items needed at a workstation, the more quickly you will realize how much workspace you gain.

Create Zones of Storage

Spending inordinate amounts of time walking back and forth to look for an item can be very frustrating. Consider how shopping at your local grocery store is a streamlined experience because similar items are grouped together. Consider implementing a similar system in your studio. Grouping items together in one area by category (e.g., painting, beading, drawing, cutting, or sewing) saves time and allows more focus on creativity. If your work requires the need for specific types of thread, consider sorting your collections by brand, weight, fiber content, etc., to save time rummaging through multiple bins of thread. Products related to pressing, such as



A labeled multidrawer unit provides a large amount of storage in a small space.



Take advantage of the vertical space on the side of a cutting table to store rulers.



A large collection of books can easily reside in bookcases just outside a studio.

wool mats, steamers, pressing tools, and spray starch, should be within easy reach of the pressing worktable. Tiny items, due to their size, often tend to go astray leading to the need to repurchase. Using stackable multidrawer units provides a vast amount of storage in a relatively small space for collections of multibrand machine feet and accessories, sewing and machine needles, buttons, stamps, beads, and jewelry findings. Add labels to the drawers to easily find and return items to their assigned homes.

Utilize Vertical Space

Vertical space is often one of the most overlooked areas in a studio. Vertical storage keeps things off the floor, table, and out of your way. Our natural tendency is to place things in a stack on a horizontal surface resulting in items being out of view and taking up precious real estate. Maximize storage opportunities by observing and taking advantage of the available vertical space in your studio. Go floor to ceiling, especially if your space is small. It might mean that less decorative items are on view, but what you lose in aesthetics, you gain in order. Areas of hidden storage potential include:

- Back of the door
- Inside of closet door
- Floating shelves
- Pegboards
- Areas along the wall or above a workspace
- Areas under a staircase
- Areas along the side of a bookcase, cabinet, cupboard, or workstation
- Hallways just outside the studio



Floor-to-ceiling storage units along a single wall provide storage near the worktable.



A small hole drilled into rotary mats allows them to hang on the wall behind the studio door.



A customized rolling cart is ideal for holding Tsukineko dye pots and Paintstix when needed.

Roll About

Rolling utility carts are a godsend as they can be filled with small baskets, jars, or containers to keep paint, dye bottles, brushes, and other items in place while also providing mobility. Rolling carts can be tucked away when not needed, thereby avoiding the tendency to store items on a worktable until the day they are needed, which could be several months. Keep task-specific supplies in the cart to avoid it becoming a convenient catchall. June Jaeger finds her customized cart for Tsukineko inks and Fantastix brush tips especially handy to avoid accidental spills. Each color has a designated divot for the dye pot and its coordinating Fantastix. Alex Anderson keeps a wide range of 8.5 x 11-inch stabilizer packages in

a small rolling file cabinet by Ikea. There are a wide range of rolling carts on the market. Look for one that works for you and your needs.

Hide In Plain Sight

Sometimes, despite your best efforts, there just isn't enough space to have everything in one room. While you may love seeing all the art supplies, others in the household might not be as enthusiastic. A way to keep everyone happy is to utilize furniture just outside or near the studio that can house your supplies while blending in with the rest of the décor. By the way, this does not give you the green light to go back to collect all the stuff you just spent days removing from your studio. Lois Podolny's solution for storing her vast thread collections is with various consignment store finds that provide lots of storage while also being attractive. Each piece

holds a designated collection of thread, thereby making it easy to remember what is where. I'm a big proponent of upcycling what is currently in your own home or buying consignment furniture, as it is often well made at a great price point. Remember that paint can unify a group of pieces, so don't let the initial appearance drive you away. Things to consider when assessing furniture:

- Look for sturdy, well-built furniture
- Dressers, sideboards, or cabinets with multiple drawers
- Drawers that are large and wide so you can see everything
- Drawers that roll out and back easily
- Cabinets with doors that swing or slide open

see "Chaos to Creativity" on page 31



An office file cart is the perfect solution for storing 8.5 x 11-inch packages of stabilizer.



A decorative cabinet provides enough storage for an entire collection of thread.

SAQA Award won by Betty Busby at *Interpretations 2023*

Betty Busby is the latest recipient of the SAQA Award for her piece *Give and Take*. The work was juried into *Interpretations 2023* at Visions Museum for Textile Art in San Diego, California. The exhibition's jurors selected the art quilt because it meets the award's criteria for being compelling, dynamic, and progressive.

According to Busby's artist statement, the piece is a play on negative and positive space. Based on simple lines and circles, the patterns flow and intertwine over the printed, surface-designed background. The art quilt is made from cotton fabric and nonwovens. Techniques include

machine quilting, digital printing, and hand and machine-cut appliqué.

Interpretations 2023 is a biennial juried exhibition that showcases some of the most innovative art quilts being made today. It continues through December 30, 2023. Jurors for this year's exhibition were Susan T. Avila, Dolores Miller, and Jason Pollen.

The SAQA Award includes a \$500 honorarium. It is presented to one artist at four prestigious exhibitions: *Quilt National*, *Art Quilt Elements*, *Interpretations*, and *Quilt Visions*.



Betty Busby

Give and Take

69 x 40 inches | 175 x 102 cm | 2023

Promote art quilts through SAQA Trunk Show

by Beth Frisbie Wallace



Duffy Indeherberg
By myself, I am Tree

When our region (Maine, New Hampshire & Vermont) decided to rent a SAQA Trunk Show collection for three months, our goal was to offer art quilts to traditional quilt guilds to boost awareness of our fine art medium.

The trunk show is ideal for this purpose and many others, including exhibition at museums, art centers, and galleries. Currently, ten trunks are available for travel through 2024. Each one contains approximately forty art quilts made by SAQA members. Most are two-dimensional pieces that measure 7 x 10 inches. Each one is mounted on a 9 x 12-inch white backing board and sealed in a clear protective envelope, which allows for easy handling, viewing, and protection.

Three-dimensional pieces are encased in acrylic boxes. Each trunk includes a wide variety of styles, subjects, and techniques as well pieces that represent SAQA artists from around the globe.

Setting the stage

I researched ways we could best accomplish our goal to work with traditional quilt guilds. In Volume 20, No. 1, of the *SAQA Journal*, Kris Sasaki and Deb Cashatt described how SAQA groups used the trunk shows to practice critique sessions and to illustrate art quilt techniques. I was also aware that some SAQA groups have used a trunk to let participants experience the role of exhibition juror. In this scenario,



Sharon V. Buck
Childhood Memories



Beth Frisbie Wallace
Abby's Joy Ride



Shannon Maisel
Dreaming of Home

each meeting attendee is allowed to select only a handful of works to fit a theme.

I wanted to develop an approach that would bridge the gap between traditional quilts and art quilts, as we live in an area steeped in tradition. A quilt artist attending a traditional guild can feel like an oddity at best and unwelcome at worst. Often SAQA members express relief at “finding their tribe” within our organization, a need that wasn’t met through their local guilds.

Since one reason for the division seems to be based on the use of non-traditional designs and materials, I decided to present the trunk show pieces as examples of art that is made from familiar materials and

techniques, and wrote a script to accompany our rented trunk. The program format involved a participatory lecture first and then an opportunity for attendees to carefully look at the art pieces.

The chairs were arranged in rows, so we created a spread-out display around the room, hanging the art quilts in columns of three. This layout provided an opportunity for attendees to walk around and look at the pieces closely without too much crowding.

Lecture points

The initial pair of questions we asked attendees was, “What is art? What do you think of when you hear the term art?” We encouraged responses



Susie Monday
In the Park



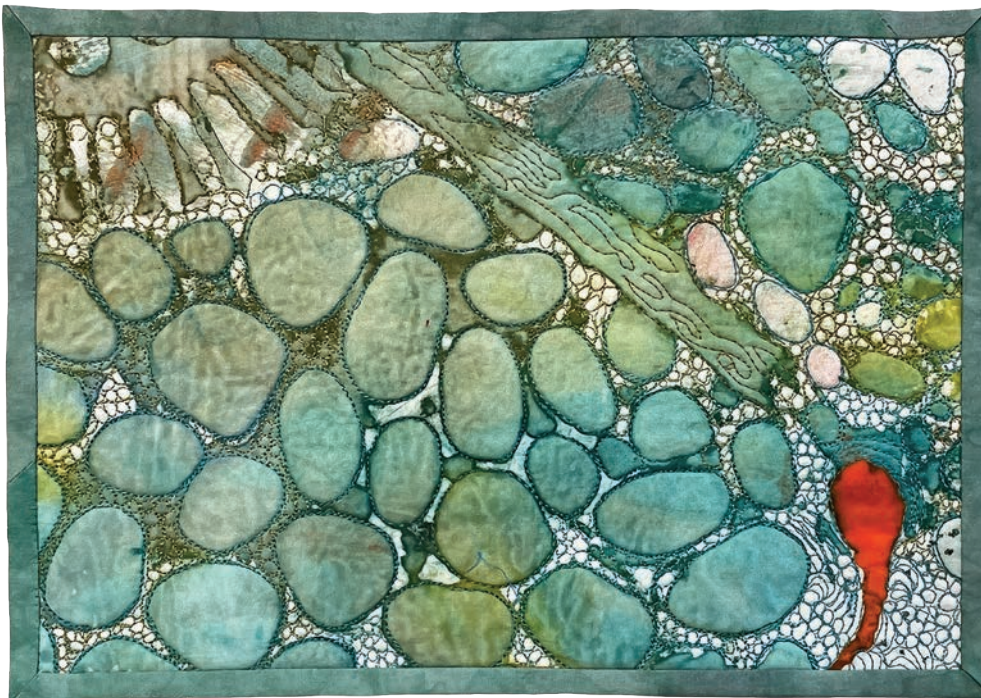
Mary Schliestedt
Golden City



Joyce King Ferrie
Hot Summer Nights



Claudia Pearce
I Z You



Kathryn Weston
Swimming Upstream

and discussion from the audience, recognizing that there are many definitions. We ultimately provided a dictionary definition such as, “a creative work of a human created as an expression.”

The second question for the audience to consider was, “What are examples of famous artists or artworks?” If the responses focused on painters, we encouraged other media, such as sculpture, photography, printmaking, and engraving.

Next we led with, “What are the subjects of the artists and artworks that we just discussed?” The common responses ranged in specificity, but included large categories such as portraits, still lifes, and landscapes. We also addressed style by recognizing that the level of abstraction and realism varies from one artwork or artist to another.

With the context of art established, we introduced quilt artists as creating “in the art tradition.” Instead of being confined to traditional art materials, quilt artists use “fiber materials such as fabrics of various fiber content, threads, yarns, beads, and buttons.” We further explained that art quilts may also include novel or nontraditional materials and techniques.

After a short description of SAQA and the traveling trunk shows to conclude the introductory lecture, we handed out cards that detailed materials and techniques for the trunk show pieces. The cards did not identify the pieces. Audience members were challenged to find the artwork that matched each card. By studying the pieces closely enough to think about the component materials and techniques, attendees were able to recognize the



Jette Clover
Winter Message



Susan Else
Worry Stone

commonalities between their quilts and the SAQA pieces. After audience members had time to study the displayed artworks, we read the answers so attendees could see how well they did.

Another approach

SAQA member Fiona White from Peterborough, Ontario, Canada, had an enthusiastic reception when she took a trunk to a local embroidery guild.

Her audience of twenty embroiderers was evenly distributed among four tables. She divided the forty artworks into four sets of ten pieces, with each set representing a range of styles and techniques. After each portion of the program, groups were instructed to exchange artworks,

allowing each table to see all of the pieces by the end of the meeting.

Attendees were told: “We will be taking a closer look at the pieces by examining and discussing them in four small groups, using the following activities as a guide. Each group has a program committee member to help out with the activity. Not all the pieces have hand stitching, but through taking a closer look, and considering design and technique, you can get ideas for your own work.”

With the first set, attendees were invited to study the artworks on their table and present their favorite to the others at the table. For the second round, attendees were asked to consider elements of design, especially line, color, and texture. Members explained to those at their

table why they were drawn to a particular piece, making observations about the design elements involved. After passing the artworks to a new table, the third round focused on technique. Attendees could make observations about a selected piece or the group could discuss a set of questions about techniques.

White said that the plan was to spend about fifteen minutes with each of the three activities and then let the attendees see the last set of ten informally. “However, they asked to continue with their table groups to discuss the fourth set,” she says.

Success found

In both the lecture and the small group discussion, the artworks have

see “Trunk Show” on page 32

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.



Tiziana Tateo Raveri

Red Obsession

50 x 66 inches | 127 cm x 168 cm | 2019



Shannon Conley

Glycocalyx

48 x 48 x 48 inches | 122 x 122 x 122 cm | 2021

Charlotte Bird

Migration

108 x 126 x 8 inches | 274 x 320 x 20 cm | 2018



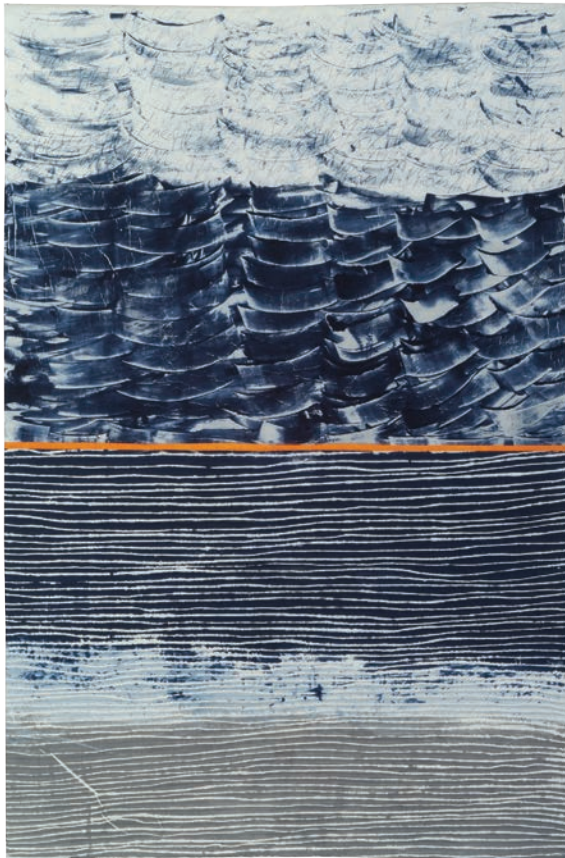


Pamela Zave

Roll

31 x 53 inches | 79 cm x 135 cm | 2018

Photo by Yolanda V. Fundora



Petra Fallaux

Horizon (Holland)

65 x 42 inches | 165 cm x 107 cm | 2017



Arlene Blackburn

Wildflower Meadow

19 x 17 inches | 48 cm x 43 cm | 2022

Barbara Bushey

ADRIFT IN CREATIVITY

by Cindy Grisdela

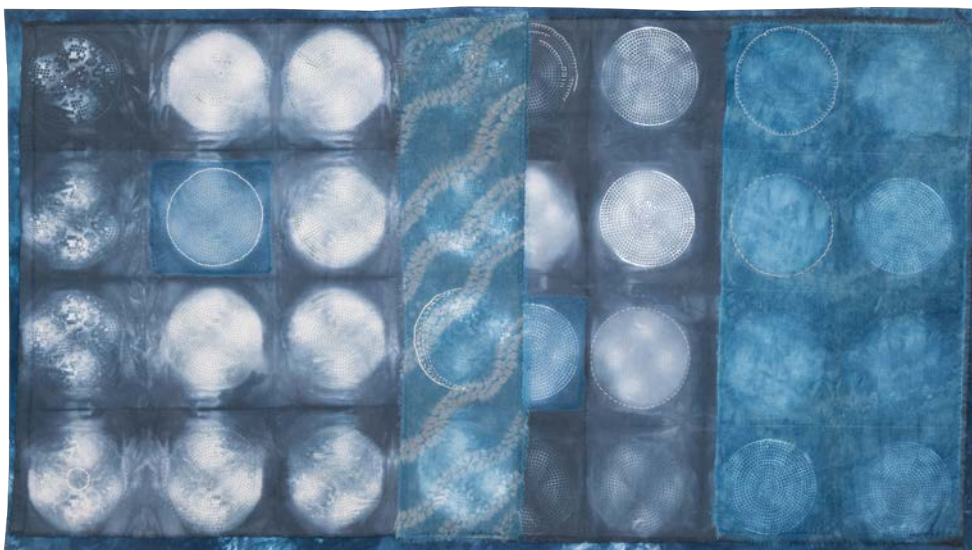


Barbara Bushey

The natural world is endlessly inspiring to Michigan artist Barbara Bushey, particularly the waters of Lake Superior.

She has frequented that area over the years, but rather than representing the world she sees around her, Bushey prefers to take the colors and impressions and interpret them in her art, as she did in *The Night, the Moon, the Lake*. The moon in its many stages is the clear focus of the piece, and the various blues in the background evoke its reflection in the waters of the lake, letting the viewer's imagination do the actual transporting.

Bushey dyes, paints, and prints her fabrics to achieve the precise colors she is looking for to express her vision. In *The Night, the Moon, the Lake*, she used hand-dyed cotton and silk for the piecing, in some cases allowing the raw edges to show, and then hand stitched details to create texture. "I like to dye my own fabrics, because I am so fascinated by and fussy about color. I do a lot of machine stitching, but the quality of hand stitching is so compelling to me that I usually end up doing a lot of that as well." In fact, she almost always has a hand-stitching project going on, both to occupy her hands in the evenings and because it's so important to her



The Night, the Moon, the Lake
24 x 43 inches | 61 x 109 cm | 2021



Shelldrake Pilings

20 x 81 inches | 51 x 206 cm | 2014

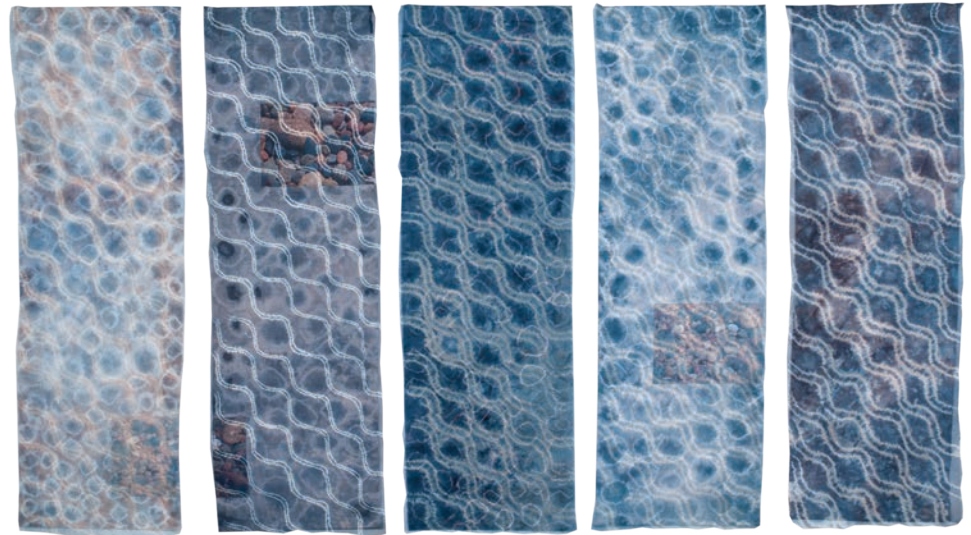
artistic process. “Hand stitches are such a human mark.”

Bushey tends to work in series, as “What if?” questions come up during the creation of one piece. Those queries lead to further explorations in color, size, or technique. Keeping notes as she creates saves those new ideas until she is ready to come back to them.

There is a clear continuum between *The Night, the Moon, the Lake* and some of Bushey’s earlier work, like *Superior Dreams I*. The older piece is a whole-cloth design, also using hand-dyed silk organza and cotton, plus a photo Bushey took of rocks printed onto cotton. The texture is created through hand quilting. It is easy for a viewer to imagine looking through swirls in the water to the lakebed beneath.

On her website, Bushey states: “My work is an exploration of what is hidden and what is revealed—whether in a visual, emotional, or historical sense. Working with layers, both physically and visually, allows me to explore this complexity.”

Bushey was drawn to textiles when she attended art school. “I was in art school, enjoying my drawing classes, graphic design classes, then I took a textiles class, and the heavens opened up and the angels sang, and I

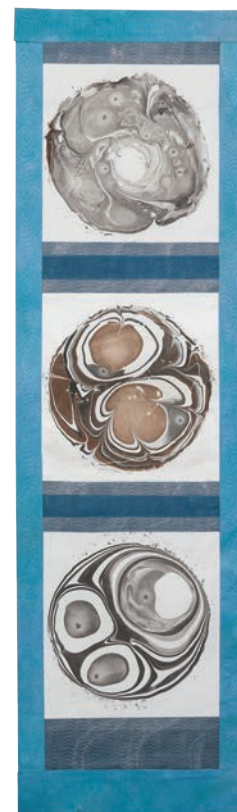


Superior Dreams I

Each panel: 39.5 x 12.5 inches | 100 x 32 cm | 2011

knew I had found my true home.” Bushey has a BFA and an MFA in textiles and graphic design, and she recently retired from a full-time teaching position at Hillsdale College, in Hillsdale, Michigan, where she lives. Two other earlier pieces, *Looking at the Shelldrake Pilings* and *Shelldrake Pilings*, demonstrate Bushey’s grasp on marbling fabric to create interesting textures and colors.

In retirement, Bushey is still working on creating a regular studio practice that works for her. Ideally, she gets to the studio after breakfast and exercise. She spends about ten minutes drawing to focus her creative energy, then decides where to go from there. “I usually begin a work with some inspiration from



Looking at the Shelldrake Pilings

44 x 12.5 inches
112 x 32 cm
2014



Wreck of the Sandusky
28 x 19 inches | 71 x 48 cm | 2021



Spring Thaw: Ice in the Harbor
22 x 30.5 inches | 56 x 77 cm | 2021

In the private collection of Lorraine and David Murphy.



Gales of November
29 x 24.5 inches | 74 x 62 cm | 2021

nature, and then work to figure out what technique will serve me best. I make a few samples, and then, if the idea seems strong enough, dive into the piece.”

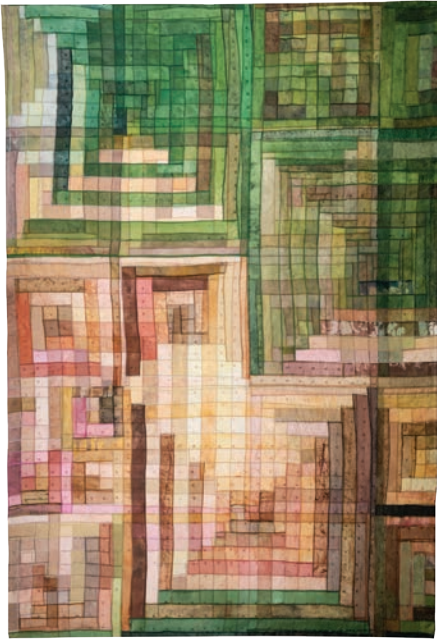
Bushey’s studio is in the walkout basement of her home, and she only has to share the space with the washer and dryer. “It’s great to have a totally dedicated space—sometimes [wondering] what to do next gets resolved just by letting something sit for a bit. Unfortunately, regardless of how many cute little hats and shoes I leave out, the art elves never drop by to finish the work,” she says. She sews on a Bernina 930 and a Bernina Activa 135.

Her piece *Wreck of the Sandusky* focuses on a line drawing of one of the many famous shipwrecks resting on the bottom of Lake Superior. The transparency of the blues in the hand-dyed silk organza makes it seem like the viewer is looking

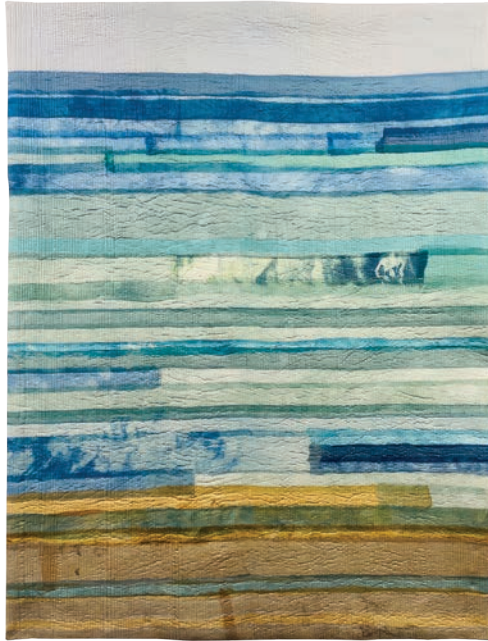
at the structure through layers of water.

Lately, Bushey has been intrigued by the structures of log cabin blocks and the transparencies of bojagi, a traditional Korean patchwork practice. *Spring Thaw: Ice in the Harbor* and *Gales of November* exemplify this exploration. *Spring Thaw* is created from commercial cottons and hand-dyed organza, hand-quilted, and machine-pieced. The light hues depict the ice and the blues represent water, bringing to mind the spring breakup of ice on the lake.

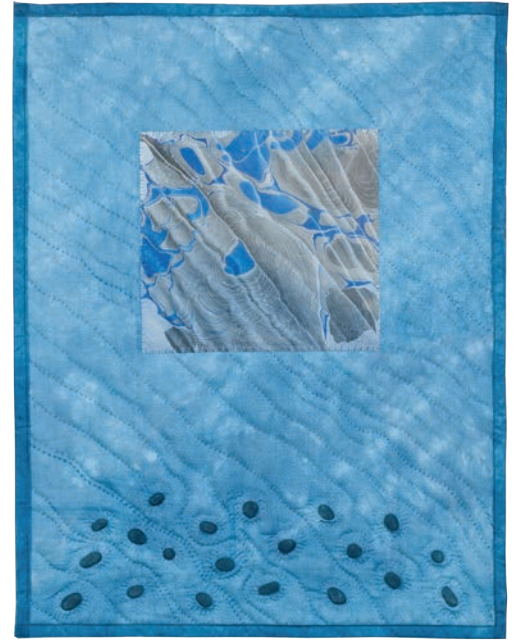
Gales of November evokes a different season—the winds that can rage forty miles per hour in the autumn on Lake Superior, memorialized in the Gordon Lightfoot song *The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald*, released in 1976. This piece has a foundation of hand-printed cotton, with hand-dyed organza (some monoprinted), and is machine



Magnolia After the Storm
61 x 41.5 inches | 155 x 105 cm | 2022



I Love to Go Swimming in Whitefish Bay
39.5 x 30 inches | 100 x 76 cm | 2023

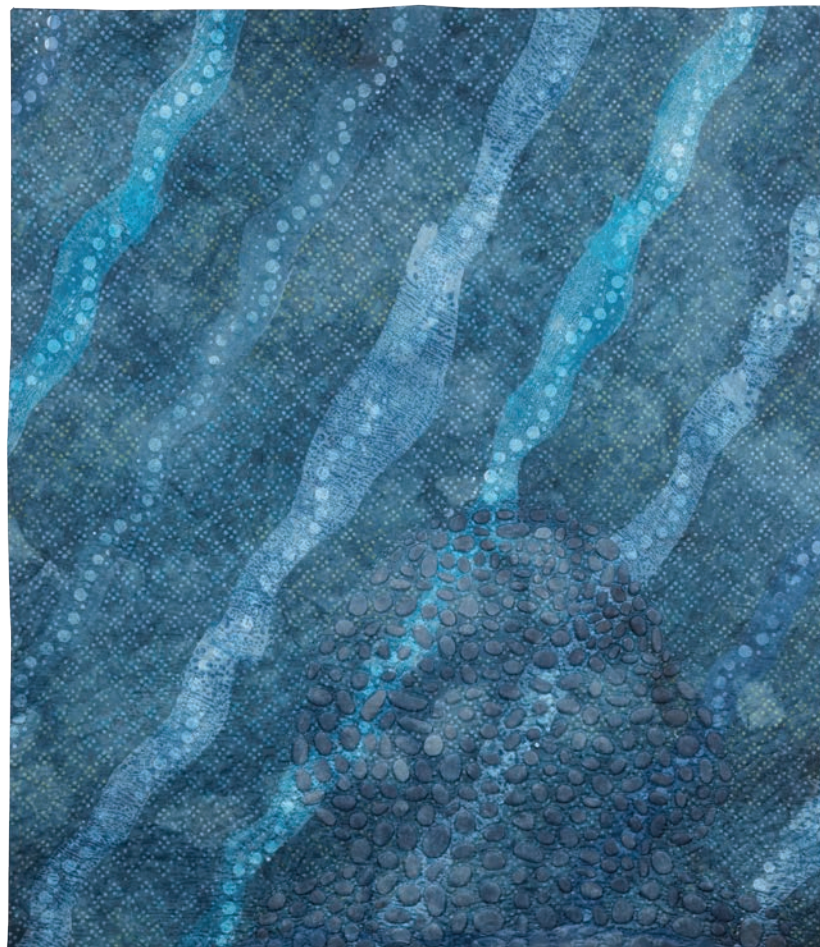


Superior Moods V
23.5 x 18 inches | 60 x 46 cm | 2013

pieced and quilted. The tilted log cabins suggest the ferocity of the storm, while the layers of organza give depth to the composition.

These characteristics of structure and transparency are also on display in Bushey's work juried into *Quilt National '23*, titled *Magnolia after the Storm*. This piece has a different color story of pink, green, brown, and tan, and a different inspiration from nature. One of her neighbors has a magnolia tree that bloomed before an ice storm one spring, and the frost damage turned the delicate pink and white blooms into pink and brown. Fascinated by the contrasts, Bushey began work on the design. She hand dyed and painted cotton and silk organza, then machine pieced the composition together using the log cabin structure. The piece began to grow

see "Barbara Bushey" on page 34



We are mostly water but we cannot swim
42 x 35 inches | 107 x 89 cm | 2018

Selections from

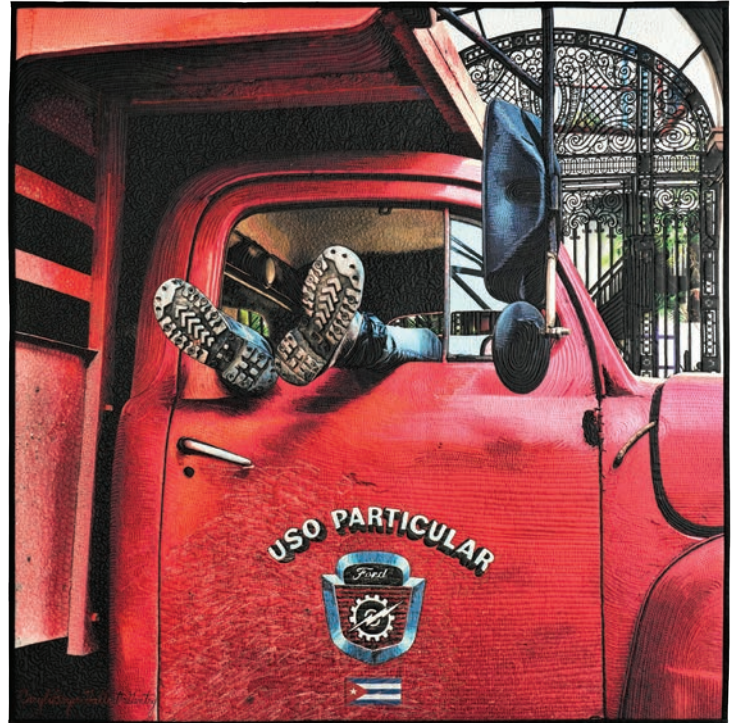
COLOR | RED

IN CONTEXT

Color in Context: Red made its debut this year at the International Quilt Festival in Houston, Texas. The energy and impact the art quilts offer viewers is palpable and unforgettable.

The use of red can evoke excitement, danger, anger, or love. It is associated with purity in India, and in China it is an omen of good luck. Red is also a primary color, crucial to the creation of other hues.

This SAQA Global Exhibition includes 40 art quilts chosen by juror Judy Kirpich, a textile artist who resides in the United States. The exhibition benefactor is Frank Klein. The collection will travel for the next three years. For more information and to see all of the exhibition artwork, visit www.saqa.com/red.



Caryl Bryer Fallert-Gentry

Siesta Cubano

30 x 30 inches | 76 x 76 cm | 2023

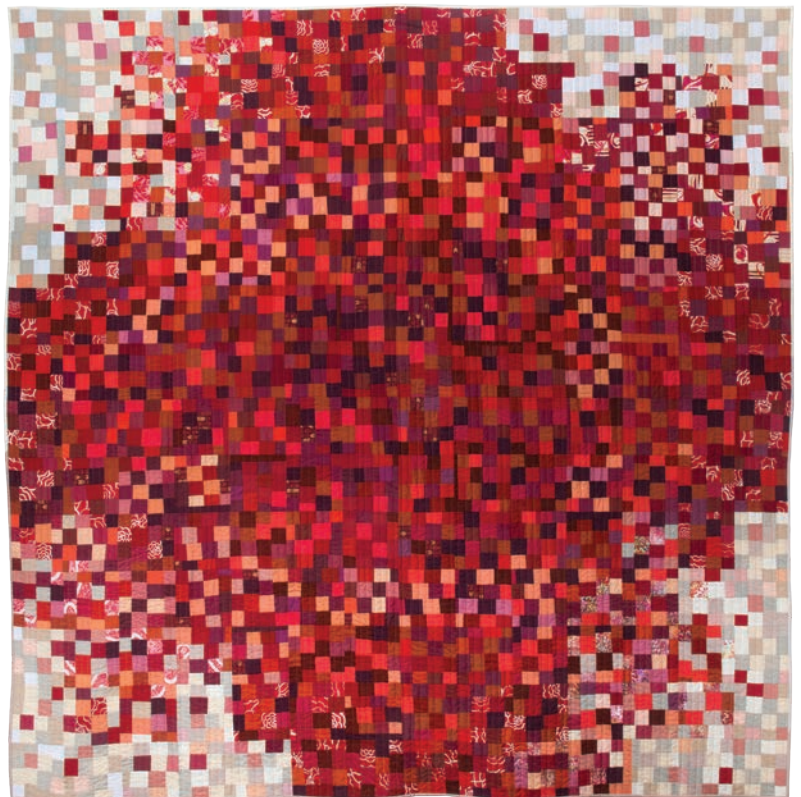


Pat Kroth

Heart of Darkness

60 x 48 inches | 152 x 122 cm | 1998

Photo by William Lemke

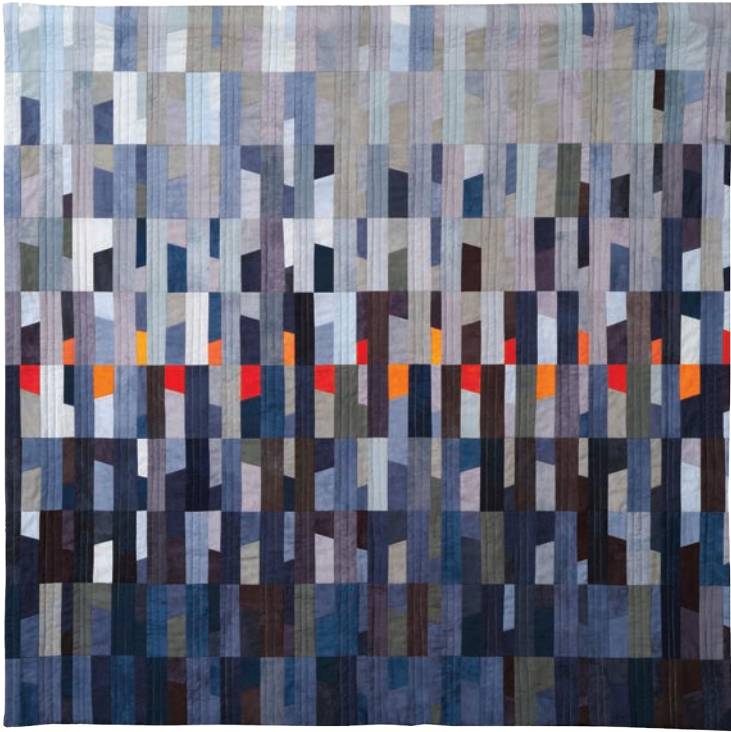


Laura Shaw Feit

Your Mother. Your Daughter. Your Sister. Your Grandmother. You.

82 x 82 inches | 208 x 208 cm | 2022

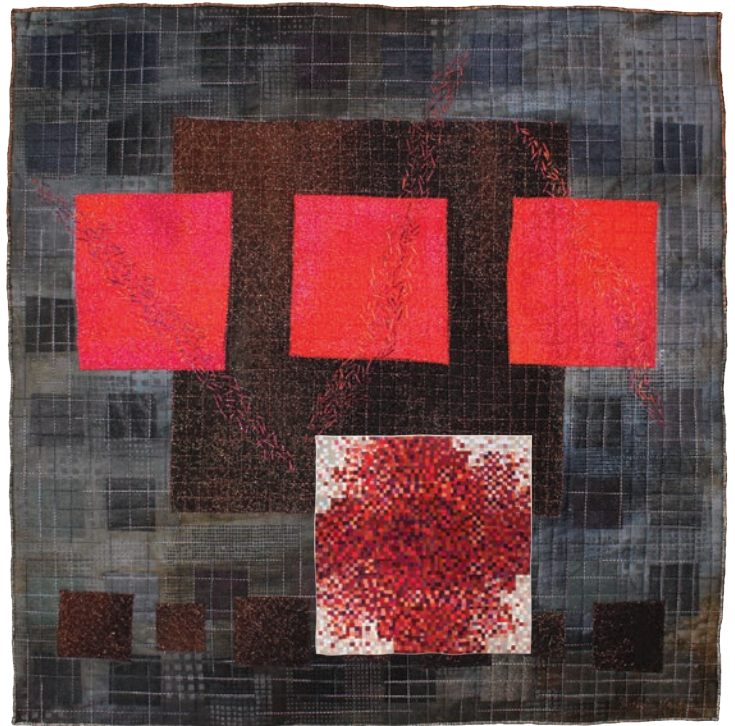
Photo by Hoddick Photography



Petra Fallaux

Shimmering Horizon

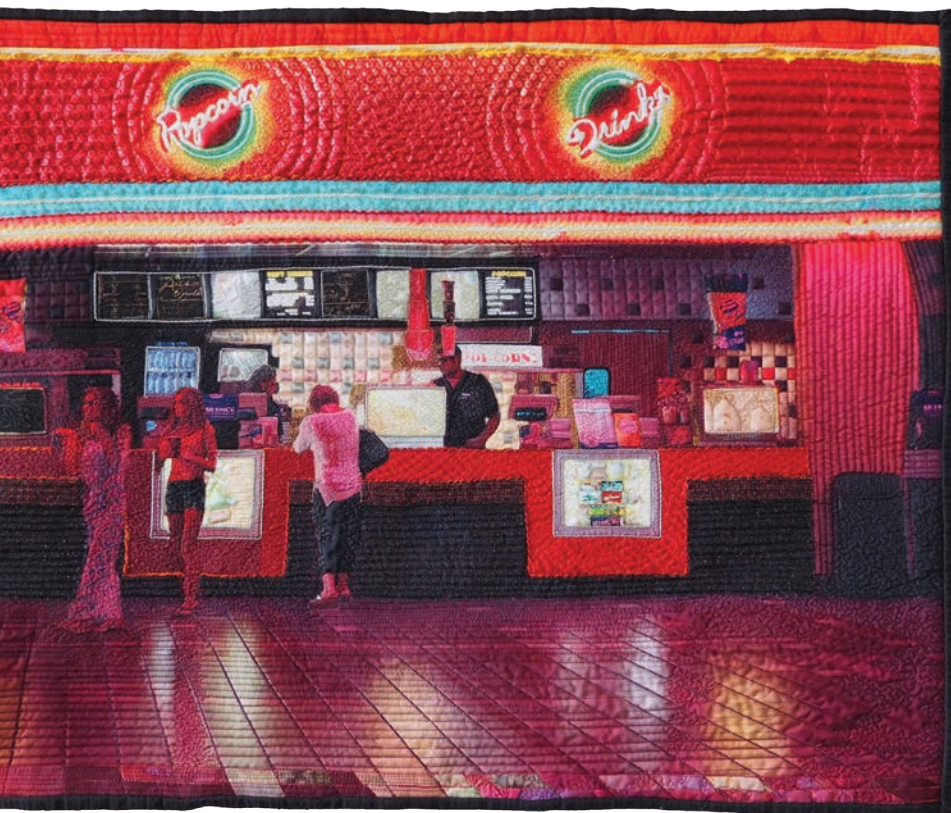
47 x 47 inches | 119 cm x 119 cm | 2020



Michele Hardy

Colorfields: Rhodonite

33 x 33 inches | 84 x 84 cm | 2022



Jill Kerttula

Movie Time

28 x 34 inches | 71 x 86 cm | 2021



Paula Dean

32850-Big Dreams Take Grit

27 x 19 inches | 69 x 48 cm | 2022

Incorporate commercial tasks to boost productivity, professionalism

by Kestrel Michaud

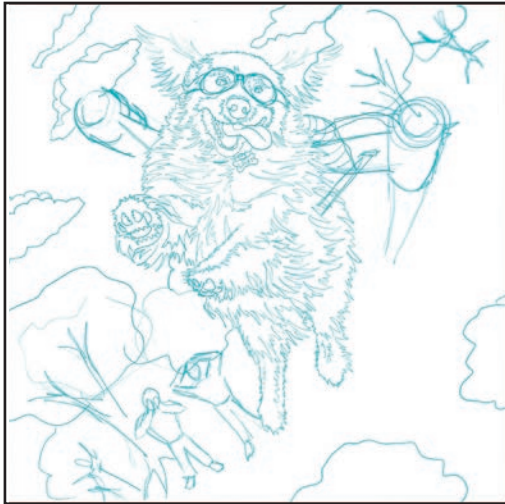


Figure 1

Creating artwork for business requires a different mindset than creating artwork for oneself. In a commercial setting, artists create artwork for other people instead of for their own personal desire. Although allowing external forces to impact creative work is anathema to some artists, personal creators can borrow practices used by commercial artists to streamline the flow of their own creativity. Developing a design, managing time, and keeping records are all things commercial artists have to do, and personal artists could benefit from incorporating these practices into their workflow.

(Note: For the purpose of this article, “commercial artist” refers to any creative individual creating artwork for a third party. Examples include fine artists working on commission, freelance artists working with clients, and artists employed by corporations who may or may not be working as part of a creative team.)

Design Development

For many quilters, the act of creating a new design is rather nebulous. They try different things and see what works together or feels good. This kind of spontaneous creation is fine, but it can lead to problems such as not knowing why a design isn't working or not knowing when the design is finished.

Due to time constraints and client expectations, commercial artists do not have the luxury of organic creativity. In order to make sure the work they create is finished on

time and is pleasing to their clients, commercial artists put significant time into developing a design before starting work on the final product. They'll make concept sketches; build, light, and photograph three-dimensional scale models; and do value and color studies. All of this preliminary work allows for strong communication between the artistic team and client. That way, everyone is on the same page and has a clear goal so that they all know what has to be done in order for the art to be considered finished.

Although I am no longer a commercial artist, I incorporate all three of those practices into my own work to build and strengthen my designs before starting the physical quilts—to the point that fully half of the total time I put into making a quilt is done before I even look at a piece of fabric.

Concept sketches are quick sketches that take usually ten to fifteen minutes. They help me work out the composition for major elements of a design. Fig. 1 shows three concept sketches for *The One That Got Away*. I was working out the positioning and gestures of the men standing on the ground behind the dog, Lucky.

I also light and photograph my own models to get correct reference photos for my designs. Fig. 2 is the photo I took of the scale human figure model I positioned and lit appropriately for the design. This photo was my reference for the man



Figure 2

in the quilt who dropped Lucky's leash. (I used a stock photo for his open-mouthed expression, visible in the quilt.)

Lastly, every digital template I make is a color study. I use the digital interface to work out exactly what colors and values will look best. Fig. 3 shows the full-size digital template of *The One That Got Away* next to the finished quilt.

By putting in effort at the beginning of the quilt creation process, I build a roadmap for my project. Extra development upfront will help create a more solid design and a clear finish line. Furthermore, it's far easier to work out wrinkles in the design during preliminary development than after I start cutting fabric.

Time Management

I have at times found myself in the position of sacrificing "quilt time" in favor of anything unexpected that comes up in life. There are only so many hours in the day, and creative time always seems to be the easiest thing to give up when push comes to shove. My studio is also in my home, so it's a challenge to separate my work and art from daily life.

But for commercial artists, their art is their job, and that requires a specific time commitment. They must allocate at least eight hours a day to working on artwork. Furthermore, projects cannot drag on indefinitely. A commercial artist who does not dedicate daily time to creating, or does not finish projects

on time, is not going to get paid. Money changes everything.

Although I'm no longer working as a freelance graphic designer, I've tried to maintain some of the habits I developed back then and apply them to being a fine art fabric artist. I can no longer work in a solid, eight-hour block every day, but I have an established morning routine that allows me to get in four hours of work plus breakfast and exercise before lunch. My afternoons are flexible. I do that every day, and it helps me feel accomplished even if I don't get back to the studio in the afternoon.

I also dedicate one day a week to nothing but artwork. Fridays are my creative day. Everything else in life goes on hold. I don't cook, I don't do laundry, I don't schedule appointments on Fridays, and I don't work on other aspects of my business like answering emails, writing articles, or making videos. Fridays are for art. Even if the rest of my week is occupied with non-artistic things, Fridays are sacrosanct.

Lastly, I make a point to finish my quilts. I try to use quilt shows as deadlines, which keeps me on track to keep creating throughout the year. Thanks to my artistic Fridays, I make progress on the latest quilt every week. And all of the development work I put into my designs makes it very clear how much work needs to go into a project and at what point it will be complete.

Being self-employed requires some compromises to reach a healthy work/art/life balance. But



Figure 3

maintaining a schedule and having some guaranteed creative time every week has really helped me find success in my quilt career and improve my mental health.

Keeping tabs

A habit I picked up as a freelance graphic designer and have since applied to my quilts is keeping track of my time. I routinely logged my hours so that I could bill my clients. A commercial artist who doesn't track hours is one who doesn't get paid, and I was no exception. But I have since found that knowing how much time I put into my art is helpful in personally and monetarily valuing my work.

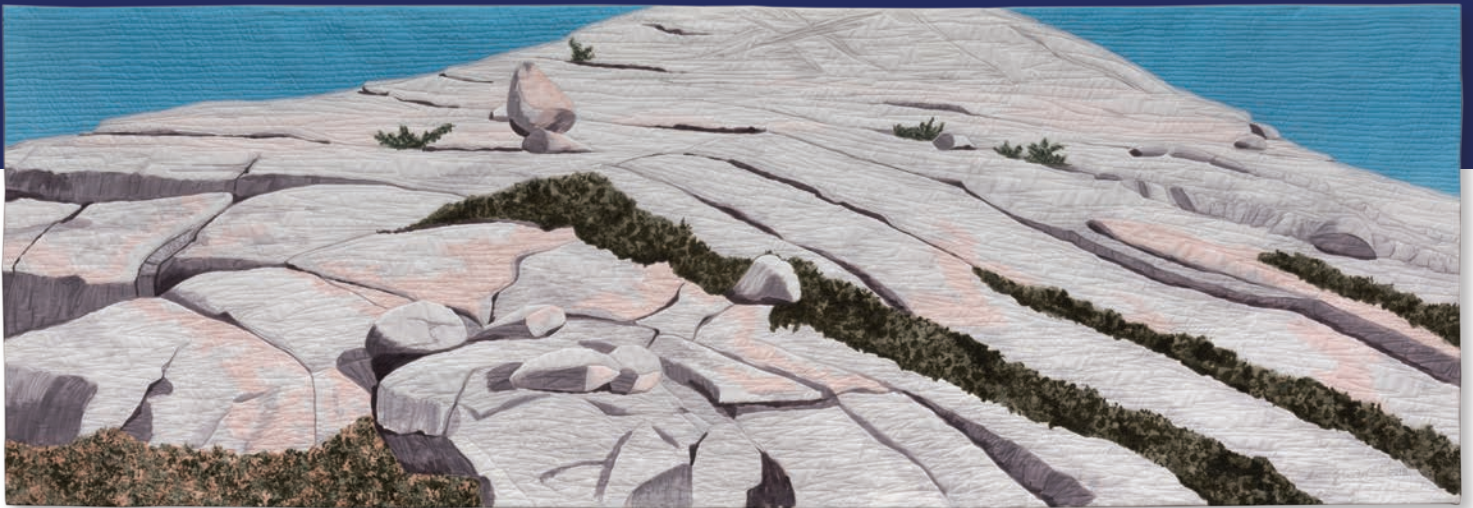
I have a record for how much time it took to make every quilt I've

made, going back years. Starting a few years ago, I began to track how long it took to do each part of my creative process, the cost of materials that went into each quilt, and each quilt's sale price. As a result, I know that the number of fused appliqué pieces of fabric in the design has a greater impact on total time the project will take to complete than the overall size. I know that about half of the time I spend on a project is entirely development, and approximately 45 percent is just quilting. I know that *The One That Got Away* took 28 yards of fusible, used over 100 different fabrics, and cost about \$450 in total material expenses. I also know how much I made per hour based on the price for which it sold.

I can look at this information over time and put a realistic, quantifiable value on my time and artwork. This, in turn, has helped me improve my sense of self-worth, because I have data that shows I am improving (which, for me, means I'm getting faster at making my art, which means I'm making more per hour when it sells).

For the record, monetary valuation is not the only benefit. Knowing how long it took to make past artwork can help estimate the time it will take to make future projects. This is an invaluable tool when it comes to deciding what artwork to make to meet a deadline or quoting time to complete a commission. Knowledge is power.

see "Commercial Tasks" on page 33



Exfoliating 2851 by Ann Johnston

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EXHIBITIONS

9
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Visit www.saqa.com/donate to continue our mission to support the art quilt.



Keep website *current* to engage viewers

by Clara Nartey

A professional website is a necessary tool in an artist's toolbox. For some of us, it's tempting to set one up and then forget about it for years. For others, although we know that we need to update our website periodically, we don't exactly know what things to update.

In this article, we'll discuss some of those elements. However, before we get to that, let's start with a couple of reasons why you want to keep your website updated. You want to:

- Make sure that people interested in you and your art have a reason to return to your website after their first visit. An out-of-date website screams to the visitor that the artist isn't serious.
- Inform search engines that yours is an active website. This makes it more likely for your website to rank high and show up in internet searches.
- Give users a good user experience, thereby encouraging them to stay longer on your website.

So what information should you include on your artist website to keep it relevant to visitors and search engines? Key elements to include and keep current range from events to studio updates.

Following are twelve important components to keep visitors engaged:

- **Professional Documents:** Some of our most important documents are artist statements, biographies, and resumé's. These documents aren't static. They evolve as we and the art we create changes. After you update each of them regularly in your computer files, remember to change them on your website.
- **Events:** Someone once said to me that the arts revolve around events. When you really think about it, this is true. As an artist, there are always art events going on around you, whether you're directly involved in them or not. Examples of such events are artist talks, receptions, residencies, exhibitions, studio visits, and more. You can write about each event you're involved in on your website. Having said that, keep your events up to date. If a five-year-old event shows up first on your website's event calendar, you are giving the impression that you're no longer an active artist.
- **Teaching/Workshops:** If you teach, keep the information on your various workshops and courses up to date. Delete programs you no longer offer and clarify changes you've made to

older courses. Highlight new courses and how they're different from your previous offerings.

- **Artwork Portfolios:** As I alluded to at the top of this article, we change and so does our work. Keep your art portfolios reflective of your current work and style. Scrub your portfolio of older styles. Also, resist putting your entire body of work on your website. A streamlined portfolio is easier to navigate. You can send more information to visitors upon request.
- **Price Lists:** There's always been a question as to whether to show prices of your artworks on your website. Whether your price list is published or not, it's a good thing to update your prices when they change. Also, it's pretty frustrating for a collector to fall in love with a piece of work on your website only to later learn that it's been sold. Avoid that by frequently updating your website to indicate SOLD or NFS (not for sale) pieces.
- **Studio Updates:** Newsworthy activities such as new work, an interesting work in progress, or major construction or reorganization in your studio are all items to be shared on your website.
- **Accomplishments:** As an artist, there are a number of different things that you may achieve in your career. Things like features in publications, notable appearances on panel discussions/presentations, and awards ceremonies, are all worthy of mention on your website
- **Software Updates:** In the same way that you need to keep your website up to date, software providers also update their software (for example web apps and plug-ins). They do this by providing security updates that give you better protection from hackers, performance improvements, and bug fixes to correct known problems. In order to ensure your website is operating at peak performance, remember to update all software periodically or whenever you receive a notification to do so.

- **Copyright Notice:** Most websites have a copyright notice at the bottom of the home page. A well-designed website should have the year in the copyright notice change automatically at the beginning of every year. Not all websites do that. Keep an eye on yours and make sure it's correctly updated every new year.
- **Secure Website:** Some websites have SSL certificates (something that verifies your website's identity and gives users a level of trust that your website is secure). When an SSL certificate expires, visitors to your website will see a warning that says your website is not secure. Obviously, that warning is sure to scare visitors and drive them away from your website. Therefore, if your website has one of these SSL certificates, it's important to keep track and to renew your SSL certificate on time.
- **Contact Information:** Be sure to keep your email and phone number current on your website. If you use a contact form on your website, occasionally test it out to make sure the submit button works.
- **Social Media Links:** Have you ever visited a website and clicked through to their Facebook link or X (formerly Twitter) link only to find out that the last time they posted on those accounts was eight years prior? Avoid that bad impression by cleaning up your social media links on your website. If you're no longer active on Facebook, Instagram, Medium, Pinterest, or whatever social media platforms you've linked to on your website, get rid of those links.

There you have it—twelve website areas where updates keep your website active and appealing to those who want to learn more about you and your work. ■

Clara Nartey is an artist, writer, and educator who resides in Connecticut. You can learn more about her art practice and educational programs on her website, www.claranartey.com.

In the Mix

Jo-Ann Morgan

Sueños de La Madre

60 x 42 inches | 152 x 107 cm | 2021

Photo by 803 Labs



Zwia Lipkin Kashgar

Dentist

13 x 10 inches | 33 x 25 cm | 2023



Carolyn Skei

Lizzie

14 x 14 inches | 36 x 36 cm | 2022





Carla Corbin

Wood Remembers Tree

14 x 14 inches | 36 x 36 cm | 2022



Mary Ritter

Generations Linked

37 x 40 inches | 94 x 102 cm | 2019



Cynthia Jarest

Lunar Sentinels

39 x 21 inches inches | 99 x 53 cm | 2023

Photo by Cameron Bridges

Claire Passmore

Beautiful Monster

16 x 23.5 x 23.5 inches | 41 x 60 x 60 cm | 2022

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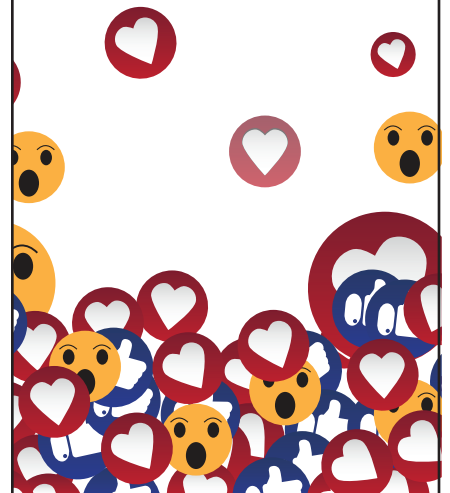
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Chaos to Creativity

from page 8

- Bookcases with doors that open easily
- Furniture pieces that combine well with others include dressers, bookcases, entertainment centers, kitchen hutches, etc.
- Create a unified look when mixing pieces by painting all pieces in the same color or manner.

Part IV of this series will focus on ideas regarding the importance of adapting the studio as needs change due to age, health conditions, and downsizing. ■

Lilo Bowman is the Vice President of SAQA, the author of the book Love Your Creative Space, a lecturer, and editor-in-chief of TheQuiltShow.com. She regularly lectures and consults on organizing for creative makers at all levels of achievement.



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Trunk Show

from page 13

been well-received by audience members. Generating appreciation for our art, hearing the “oohs” and “aahs,” and promoting SAQA have been the rewards of this experience.

As these examples illustrate, to enjoy success you must know your audience. We had to consider the planning needs of local guilds, which may plan their meetings six months to a year in advance. You need to learn about possible guilds to contact through other SAQA members in your region, local quilt and embroidery shops, and internet searches. While internet listings of guilds can be out of date, there may be a guild website listed with more current information.

Also be sure of your meeting format. The choice between presenting a lecture or setting up discussion groups may hinge on the logistics of the guild meeting space and its meeting pattern. If you present in the discussion group format, it is helpful to have a leader familiar with the content at each table.

Trunk show info

Visit www.saqa.com/trunkshow to learn more about renting one of the ten trunk show collections. There you will find FAQs and more info on how to present a trunk; some venues may even want to add activities such as a workshop. The cost to rent a trunk is \$75 for SAQA members and \$150 for nonmembers.

Many of the pieces will be for sale in the SAQA Store in February 2025 when all ten trunks have returned to SAQA.

Beth Frisbie Wallace is SAQA member who resides in Frankestown, New Hampshire.



Finding Neverland #5 Blue Lagoons, detail, by Jan Soules

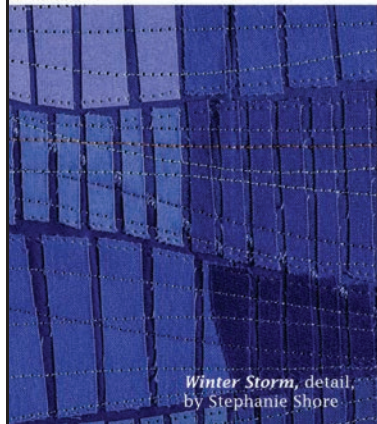
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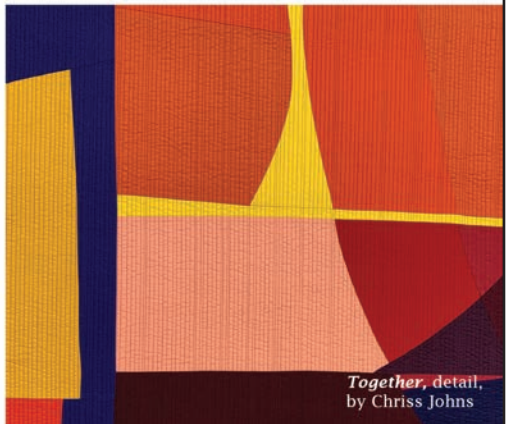


Call for Entries
 Jan 1st - Feb 9, 2024

Festival Days
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Winter Storm, detail, by Stephanie Shore



Together, detail, by Chriss Johns

Commercial Tasks

from page 24

Conclusion

Although I'm so much happier making artwork for me instead of being beholden to clients, the habits I picked up as a commercial designer have had a demonstrably positive impact on my new career as a fine art quilter. Every quilter's process is going to be different. Perhaps these habits won't work for everyone, but the lessons are still applicable. Put effort into preliminary design development, dedicate time during your week to making art, and start keeping track of your creative time, in whatever fashion makes the most sense for you. Your art, your mental health, and your self-worth will all benefit. ■

Kestrel Michaud is a SAQA member who resides in West Melbourne, Florida. You can view her work at www.kestrelmichaud.com.




Ann Johnston | Textile Artist

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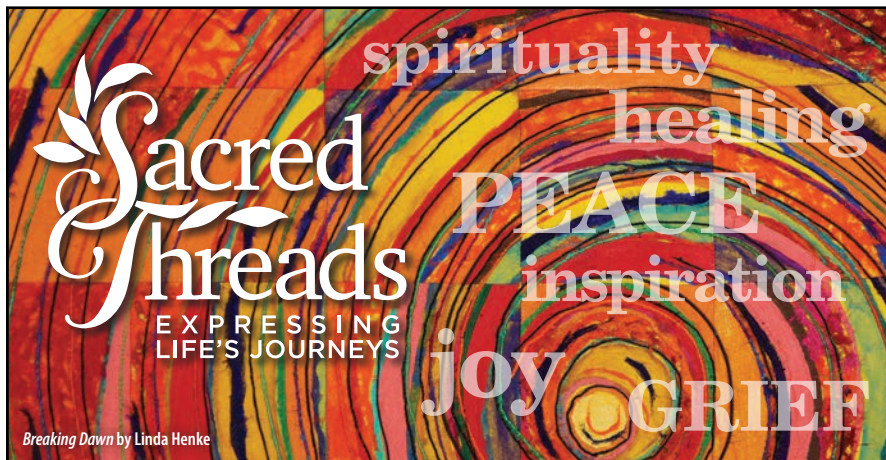
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Breaking Dawn by Linda Henke

Exciting News!

The next Sacred Threads will be held in Indianapolis in 2025. Check the website for all the details.

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Barbara Bushey

from page 19

unwieldy as she worked. By chance, she folded the piece up to work on later and realized there were richly complex transparencies happening as the layers sat on top of one another, so she embraced that vision and used hand stitching to add additional texture. She has a short video describing the process on the *Quilt National* YouTube channel. A piece from 2023, *I Love to Go Swimming in Whitefish Bay*, explores various shades of browns and blues, with a touch of teal green. This piece made from hand-dyed silk and cotton fabric represents a particular place in Bushey's imagination.

Bushey has this advice for other art quilters, whether they are just starting out or need a new way to think about their artistic practice.

"Keep working! Inspiration is for amateurs; just get to work. And finish things. Struggling toward resolution will teach you a few things, even if the finished project is not what you were hoping."

As for Bushey herself, she expects to keep making art and entering juried shows. "I'm thinking I just want to dye and silkscreen and mess around generating fabrics, and then get back to quilting. However, I have also been making sketches of the woods in the eastern UP (Upper Michigan Peninsula), and those ideas seem very compelling ways to explore bojagi—after I dye the fabric!"

Learn more about Bushey and her work at www.barbarabusheyart.com.

Cindy Grisdela is a SAQA Juried Artist who resides in Reston, Virginia. View her work at www.cindygrisdela.com.



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2023 SAQA Benefit Auction

Thank you to our generous donors and purchasers.

This year's fundraiser raised more than \$75,000 to support all of SAQA's many programs.

We are excited for 2024!



Linda Diak, *Blue Crested Chickadee aka Little Bird*



Sherri McCauley, *Bright Lines*



Susie Monday, *Wind Made Visible*



Sue Dennis, *Limocello*



Sonya Prchal, *Day's End*

In Memoriam

Six SAQA members recently passed away: Beth Blankenship, Cynthia D. Friedman, Marlene Glickman, Salli McQuaid, Barbara Naiditch, and Esta Rubin. Each one showed a great love for SAQA, and we will miss them and their artful spirits.

Beth Blankenship

Beth Blankenship of Anchorage, Alaska, passed away in August 2023. Beth was known for meticulously crafted vessels that told stories focused on the “fragility and resilience of the natural world and our place in it,” according to a statement on her website. Her hope was that her work would shine a light on the effect humans have on the natural world in order to inspire reflection and reform. Her work is held in private and public collections throughout the United States.

Cynthia D. Friedman

Cynthia D. Friedman of Merion, Pennsylvania, passed away September 29, 2023, from esophageal cancer.

Cindy served as a SAQA board member and regional rep. She trained as an industrial and fashion designer, graduating from the Philadelphia College of Art in 1978; she then taught fashion design at Drexel University and designed women’s runway clothing. Her art quilts, which reflected her fascination

with human body forms and shadows, were exhibited at many national and international shows—including *Quilt National* and the Atlanta Airport. She was the co-founder of *Art Quilt Elements*, which takes place at Wayne Art Center in Wayne, Pennsylvania.

Marlene Glickman

Marlene Glickman died on May 28, 2023, at her home in Dunedin, Florida. Marlene, a silk dye and fiber artist, was president of the Tampa Bay Surface Design Guild. She was a representative for Colorhue Dyes, Dharma Trading Company, and Steam-A-Seam.

She is remembered as a tireless mentor and someone who set an example of what it takes to be a professional artist.

Salli McQuaid

Conceptual artist Salli McQuaid of Walla Walla, Washington, passed away on July 31, 2023. Her work explored contemporary issues through complex piecing, with meaning added through computer-manipulated longarm stitching. She earned a master’s degree in art from San José State University School of Art and Design. Her work has been hung at The Foundry and Whitman College in Walla Walla and in exhibitions across the country. Her work is held in public and private collections.

Salli greatly appreciated SAQA and the guidance provided over the years, said her husband, Mike McQuaid. Donations in her memory may be made by emailing Martha Sielman at info@saqa.art.

Barbara Naiditch

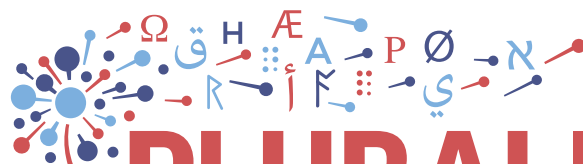
Barbara Naiditch, whose love of art quilts ranged from monochromatic abstracts to rugged portraits, recently passed away. She lived in Oakland, California. SAQA thanks her family for remembering her with a donation to our organization.

Esta Rubin

Esta Rubin of Port St. Lucie, Florida, passed away on September 18, 2023, from pneumonia related to the Covid-19 virus.

She began to quilt after being a printmaker for many years. An eye disease caused her to become legally blind, and she turned to quilting with help from a friend and support of her husband, Brian Drinkwater. After discovering art quilting, she began to collage, which allowed her to repurpose some of her prints. Her most recent work expressed her concern for the planet.

SAQA will miss all of these members, whose sense of camaraderie and art touched us with grace.



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Only Art Quilts in the Building

Hulu's *Only Murders in the Building* champions fabric portraiture

by Diane Howell



Actor Paul Rudd was the subject of an art quilt produced by a team for a scene in Season 3, Episode 9, of Hulu's *Only Murders in the Building*.

Photo by Rich Murray

Fans of Hulu's *Only Murders in the Building* love the television show. Fans who are also quilt artists now know the show loves them. That's because in Season 3, Episode 9, a fabric portrait of guest star Paul Rudd hangs in a crammed sewing room filled with fabric, machines, and refreshments.

How did an art quilt find itself thrust into pop culture?

It started with the script. Bless the writers! When the script was passed to the set decorators, their textile

mission was clear. The catch was that the show's artistic team had only two weeks to build a set, furnish it, and create an art quilt that would define a screwball moment.

The man responsible for the sewing room's special elements was set decorator Rich Murray. He led the team who created the portrait quilt, which measured 75 inches in height and 95 inches in width. Many approvals were necessary, starting with Rudd, the producers, and production designer.

Murray also needed to get the rights to the picture, one previously approved by Rudd for use as a memorial tribute to his character. Then, because the image would be changed in the creative process, Murray ran it through the company's legal department. To keep you in the script loop, you need to know that Rudd plays this season's murder victim, crotchety actor Ben Glenroy. As such, he is the focus of the show's stars, Steve Martin, Martin Short, and Selena Gomez.

Together, they investigate murders in their New York City apartment building. They report their progress on a podcast that is dreaded by some listeners and loved by others.

The next step was fabric selection. “I wanted to use brown and warm tones for the Ben Glenroy image [which was the character’s standard color palette throughout the season], and knew I needed to procure a premade quilt in cool, bluesy jewel tones. A good friend of mine, Jessica Watters, who is a quilt designer, had such a quilt in her stock,” Murray says. The tight timeline was the reason for the completed quilt being the background for the piece.

Lindsay Stephen, another show decorator, located portrait fabrics from the show’s warehouse and a couple of vendors. She selected about thirty fabric samples that ranged in tone from chocolate brown to off-white. Color saturation and texture were important factors, which meant that even corduroy was included.

“I worked with one of our graphic designers, Valerie Schuman, to scale the Paul Rudd image to the base quilt, and developed the pattern with thirteen or fifteen fabrics that would become his likeness,” Murray says. The fabrics were scanned into Photoshop, allowing them to be viewed and manipulated on screen. This allowed the duo to be able to add more texture in certain parts of the face, more detail in the hair, and separation at the shirt collar and button band. Then, a full-sized pattern was printed out and lines

were drawn on it to delineate each portion of the portrait.

“I sent the project to our favorite textile artist, Brenda Colling, who assembled the entire piece,” Murray says. Colling provides textile art for interior designers, set decorators, installations, and collectors. She has created other décor for the show, and some of her own art was rented for use in a gallery scene in Season 2.

How long did she have to work on this project? Somewhere in the neighborhood of three days, which was not as hectic as it sounds. Murray made sure all other tasks were done based on when Colling would need to have the project in hand to complete its final stage.

Colling says she tweaked the template pieces somewhat. “There were many tiny details that could not be incorporated in the final piece,” she says. She put it together in the most logical manner. “I used some fusible to adhere the pieces. Some were stitched. I built up the portrait piece by piece, and then stitched the form onto an existing quilt provided by Rich.”

Murray says, “Once it came back to us, and we stopped laughing and caught our breath, our decorator who was taking the lead on that set, Deirdre Brennan, and I, along with production designer Patrick Howe, decided to hang the finished piece over the counter that serves as the coffee/break area in the back room.”

Adding more context to the portrait is the fact that it lives in a room that was built by the show’s

set decorators to be a sewing room. It is a comfortable place where Rudd’s character—while he is still alive—hangs with his ladies on Thursdays. It is imbued with believability because of all the extra steps taken to make it look real. Those steps included renting sewing machines from Gotham Quilts in New York and giving the actors a sewing machine lesson prior to filming. Shelves were built to hold fabric bolts from the show’s warehouse. There is even a detail the viewing audience never sees, but which created ambiance for the actors. “I knew I wanted to feel the scraps of thread around the floor at the base of those machines. I shredded fabric for an hour so there would be lint,” Murray says.

In the end, the quilt—visible for only seconds—is a glowing testament to Rudd’s character, who the sewing ladies obviously miss an awful lot.

“As with many custom projects on any television set, the most successful work tends to come from an organized collaborative effort. We had so much fun with this piece—and it’s really a tribute to a great team of writers, producers, designers, and decorators.”

Now that the episode has been filmed and streamed on Hulu, it’s not clear where the fabric portrait resides. It might be going to a charity auction. It might be in someone’s home. The only thing that is known is that the quilt has left the building. ■

Diane Howell edits the SAQA Journal. She resides in the Phoenix Metro.

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