

SAQATM JOURNAL

STUDIO ART QUILT ASSOCIATES

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INSIDE: MEET BLAIR TREUER • CREATE REALISTIC REFLECTIONS • RASTER VS VECTOR DIGITAL ART • PART 4: FROM CHAOS TO CREATIVITY • ONLINE VS IN-PERSON WORKSHOPS • MEMBER GALLERY: BLUE REVIEW • STITCHPUNK • INSPIRED

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ON THE COVER:

Blair Treuer

To Become a Flower

12 x 12 inches | 30 x 30 cm | 2023

Photo by Rik Sferra

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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New year, new opportunities for SAQA Journal readers

by Diane Howell

In 2024, both subtle and big changes are afoot at SAQA Journal.

For starters, we have expanded our coverage of SAQA Global Exhibitions from a two-page gallery department to a full-length article. Each issue will feature one or two exhibitions in an article written by Patty Kennedy-Zafred, who has brought her talents from *Art Quilt Quarterly* to SAQA Journal. Thank you, Patty!

We also are on the lookout for artists who have recently completed or will soon embark on new projects: solo exhibitions, new series, awards—all the numerous possibilities. Let us know what you are working on and the recent accomplishments you have made so you can be considered for various articles. Write to me at editor@saqa.com with details.

And then, there is the big change: SAQA Journal Gallery. This special section will feature a print exhibition of today's best art quilts. All members are welcome to review the call for entry

and submit images. For details about the call and info on how to submit, visit www.saqa.com/journal-gallery.

Editorial content within the magazine section of the fourth issue will feature different types of articles too. Those will include art trends and a new department called *In Studio*, where individual artists will be featured, similar to the *Artists to Watch* pieces that I edited in *Art Quilt Quarterly*. The pieces will be presented in article format, allowing for more observations and details to be learned about each artist.

As always, new writers and ideas are welcome. While we can't commit to every idea (we only have four issues per year!), we are happy to consider what you are interested in sharing. Education is shaping up to be a big topic for 2024, as are new experiences and outlooks. Again, you can reach me at editor@saqa.com with ideas.

We can't wait to hear from you, because each new idea allows us to

explore fiber art from a new angle.

Each contact lets us know what you are doing and what you want to read.

This current issue is the first step in a new editorial direction. I hope you enjoy reading about *StitchPunk* on page 19. Meet featured artist Blair Treuer on page 10. Find Kestrel Michaud's insightful primer on raster versus vector digital art on page 16, and her story about creating realistic reflections on page 30. Lilo Bowman wraps up her four-part series on organization—*From Chaos to Creativity*—on page 5, and I asked many people how they like to teach and learn: online or in person? See what they say on page 26. Our regular departments complete the issue, including the *Inspired* column, which this issue features work by Pat Gould, our woman for special projects, who retired at the end of 2023. Thanks, Pat, for everything. You are special and I wish you much happiness.

Enjoy the read! ■

Time zooms by as networking advances

by Mel Beach



The past two years serving as SAQA Board President have zoomed by quickly both literally and figuratively! My term started on Zoom at the end of the SAQA Florida *Bridging the Gulf* virtual conference.

While I understand some folks are “zoomed” out, I am appreciative of all the wonderful connections that have been made via Zoom events, meetings, and programs. The art quilting community feels more tight-knit thanks to the ability to connect with members from all over the world. SAQA membership includes art quilt enthusiasts, world-renowned fiber artists, publishers, museum curators, gallerists, and collectors. Moreover, we have members joining from many different countries and time zones as Zoom makes everything more accessible. I love how more members are designating a second region within their membership profile. And I continue to marvel at the dedicated members who log in at all hours of the day and night to participate in these online networking sessions. There is always great anticipation as the SAQA staff whisks us off into

breakout rooms. You never know who you will meet next!

Special thanks to our amazing board of directors, as they work in various capacities to help advance SAQA’s mission to promote the art quilt. My favorite portion of our monthly board meetings is starting with Mission Moments, where board members share short yet powerful anecdotes of SAQA’s mission in action. What a fantastic celebration of advancements made throughout the regions, committees, exhibitions, programs, and networking.

I’ve especially enjoyed the monthly Live Chats where I’ve had the honor of interviewing several of our incredible volunteers serving throughout the SAQA organization. During these sessions, we’ve learned more about their journey with art quilting and are often treated to photographs of their art quilts, creative spaces, and sources of inspiration. Regardless of their pathway into art quilting, they all share a common passion for SAQA’s mission as they generously share their talents and time as volunteers. Each presentation has provided inspiration

for the conversations that ensued in breakout room.

Thanks to Zoom technology, SAQA is able to offer a robust menu of accessible programs at both the regional and global level. Many of these programs focus on artistic and professional development, including the educational panel presentations, Inside SAQA sessions, the Art in Place mini virtual conference, and Collectors in Conversations sessions. Of course, SAQA certainly knows how to host a party featuring virtual art quilt exhibitions, games, and festive breakout sessions.

From April 12-20, 2024, the annual SAQA conference *Plurality and Heritage* will showcase the amazing artwork and artists in Europe and the Middle East. It is fitting that my presidency will conclude via Zoom on the last day of the conference. There we will also welcome Lilo Bowman, who will serve as SAQA’s next president. Lilo brings a wealth of energy, experience, and expertise to the SAQA board. I know SAQA will be in excellent hands. Please join us via Zoom for this wonderful celebration of art quilting and the SAQA community! ■

PART 4

From chaos to creativity

PLAN FOR THE FUTURE AND BE MORE EFFICIENT TODAY

by Lilo Bowman

Throughout this series as you've been learning how to create a more organized and efficient studio, you should also have given some thought as to how you want your studio to be in the future. As your work has evolved, so should your creative space adapt to your changing needs. Life is not a predictable constant, and while we focus on daily activities, the ground beneath our feet shifts. Our natural inclination is to ignore this fact and look the other way. There will come a time when an unexpected job relocation, relationship shift, accident, downsizing, or physical limitation arises and forces a new perspective.

Avoid the obvious

Several years ago, I teased my Dad endlessly about his collection of reading glasses scattered throughout the house. Then, out of the blue, words on the page became a bit more difficult for me to read, so I purchased a pair of cute readers, telling myself, "I really don't need to get prescription glasses, they're just making the font on pages smaller." Readers were handy, until it became a frustrating game of hide-and-seek when I needed them. I began scattering readers throughout my house. That strategy worked until I could no longer ignore my changing vision when two sets of readers were needed for work. Why do we as humans insist on digging in our heels when it comes to adapting? Change is difficult. It takes us



Consider the advantages of moving your studio into an infrequently used room on the ground level of your home.

Image courtesy of Kimberly Einmo



A collection of reading glasses can be found in many homes



A unified color scheme of white and brown allow a variety of styles, brands, and furniture to visually blend.

Image courtesy of Candice Phelan



Create a place where everything has a dedicated home.



Cut fabric at the touch of a button using the AccuQuilt GO! Big Electric Fabric Cutter.

out of our comfort zone, it requires us to rewire our brains and gives us the feeling that we are losing control of a situation. To a maker, adapting can present itself in a variety of situations:

- Adapting is shifting with changes in the industry (i.e., thread options, fusible choices, or cutting tools)
- Learning a new process (i.e., machine quilting, thread painting, software advancements, or photo editing)
- Completing a task in a different manner
- Transitioning from work that is physically labor-intensive to electronic alternatives
- Moving a studio within a residence or to a new location

Embrace change

Most of us eagerly embraced and adapted to advances that were dictated by the industry across the last thirty years. We all loved the precise advantages provided by the rotary cutter, self-healing mat, and rotary cutting ruler compared to using marking tools and scissors. And who didn't envision a world of design opportunities when domestic and

longarm sewing machines began to offer computerized and self-guided stitching at the push of a button? We shifted because we realized the benefit and value that these changes made in our lives and our art. To understand possible future changes to your studio, note how many of the following questions you answer yes to:

- Does the studio allow movement in the event you have an injury requiring a wheelchair?
- Is the doorway to the studio at least thirty-six to thirty-eight inches wide to accommodate a wheelchair or walker?
- Does the furniture in your studio allow for a rolling chair versus one you need to lift out of the way?
- Are worktables secure against walls or can they be locked in place?
- Can you easily reach everything without the aid of a ladder?
- Can you easily pull items out of a drawer versus lifting off a shelf?
- Is the flooring level and easy to roll about on?
- Is the studio clear of trailing machine cords, pet beds, throw rugs, decorative baskets, etc.?

- Does the studio lighting provide good overall and task lighting regardless of the time of day?
- Can all electronics be turned on and off with the flip of one or two switches, ideally from a standing or sitting position?
- Do you have multiple dedicated circuit outlets in the studio to accommodate high-energy drawing machines?

Adapt your space

Considering now what might occur in the future allows the opportunity to implement adaptations that will be beneficial as our needs transition. Rather than viewing changes as a negative, view them as the path along your journey as a maker. Below are several ways to incorporate adaptations that can be implemented with the future in mind:

- Have four-foot-wide door openings and hallways for easy maneuverability
- Replace knobs on drawers and closet doors with easy grip handles
- Level and easy-to-roll floor surfaces have been cleared of trip



David O. Hastings has easy-roll flooring in his studio as well as ample room to move between and around, regardless of task.



Diana S. Fox uses worktables with locking wheels to allow for easy moving—or not.

- hazards, with hanging trash bags, floor outlets, and electrical outlets raised to at least twenty-four inches high
- Adjustable tables that reach a height of thirty inches (from floor to tabletop) to aid with rolling in and out while also accommodating for twenty-four to thirty-six inches space of maneuverability around other furniture
- A dedicated ironing table placed securely against a stable surface that is not in a primary walk path
- Lower shelving for easy access in either a sitting or standing position
- Organize sharp items on pegboard or secure magnetic knife holders versus drawers to avoid nicks and cuts
- Place everything in a dedicated and labeled storage place
- Have 5000 Kelvin LED daylighting overhead and LED lights at workstations
- Install plug-in motion sensor lights along hallways and in rooms
- Locate light switches to seating height position for easy access

- Install plug-in motion sensing lights to aid with dark hallways and rooms
- Have an electrical switch that turns everything on or off as you enter or leave the room

Staying put

Let's look at some situations and ways to shift with the changing tide. When moving to a new home is not an option, look to what is available in the current residence, especially if trekking up and down the stairs results in less time in the studio. Are there infrequently used rooms downstairs that could become the new studio? Moving to the ground floor might result in a smaller studio, but one that will be utilized more often and for much longer. If overnight guests are not as common as in previous years, the primary purpose of the room can now shift to a studio with a place for the occasional overnight visitor. Modular

Large, easy pullout drawers provide a wide area for assorted thread collections grouped in inexpensive Dollar Tree containers.



Easy pull drawers with customized tall trash can openings provide the perfect place for tall stabilizer storage that is out of the way.



Image courtesy of Candice Phelan

and multifunctional furniture options, as well as semi-customized kitchen cabinetry, use less floorspace yet offer attractive options for storage, workspace, and a comfortable bed. Kimberly Einmo's converted front room of her home studio features stock kitchen cabinetry from the local hardware store. She created a customized storage wall that blended with architectural features of the room. A large island centered under the ceiling lights was also included in the final arrangement. Kimberly lists her favorite features of this storage system as:

- Pullout shelves that provide maximum usable and accessible space, especially on lower shelves
- Ironing board storage in the center "broom" closet
- A variety of cabinet depths ranging from twelve to twenty-four inches
- Soft-close drawers and adjustable shelves

Long-term planning

When it came to planning for a smaller home, Candice Phelan chose a retirement community based on the positive experiences she saw at her mother's residence. Along with the benefits of an active social community, Phelan required dedicated studio space. The single-story, semi-customizable floor plan offered easy care tile flooring, a twelve-foot ceiling, large north and east facing windows and several open-plan family/club rooms that she intended to use as studio spaces. Entering at the design phase of the project allowed Phelan to implement must-have functional items, including increasing the home's entire electrical capacity from the standard 200 amps to 300 amps, ceiling lights with 5000K LED, electrical floor outlets, and dedicated 20-amp circuits on all studio walls. Shifting from a three-room studio with walk-in closets to her new two-room studio with no closets required Phelan to purge and donate fabric collections, books, and other items with a focus

on what she could bring into the new studio.

In a move that sacrifices some square footage, it's best to utilize as much vertical space as possible. Phelan took advantage of the long expanses of wall and the twelve-foot ceiling as she designed large open storage areas. She used a combination of Ikea Kallax, Billy bookcases and two Pax Bergsbo closet units. A combination of Dollar Tree baskets, bins, and Pax wire baskets hold myriad supplies within easy reach along two walls and also serve as under-table storage. Floor plugs at each station avoid dangling cords. Large inexpensive, low-pile rugs help dampen studio noise. There is even a dedicated workspace for her saltwater fly tying hobby and beds for her two Labradoodles.

Downsizing and going electric

Changes to where and how Susie Monday works were a direct result of several critical events that happened within a two-year period. A 2018 diagnosis of rheumatoid arthritis explained why dyeing and screen printing were more frustrating and



Susie Monday's new studio has a large worktable, a long arm machine, and room for storage.

Image courtesy of Susie Monday



Susie Monday designs many of her creations with various apps on her iPad.

Image courtesy of Susie Monday

physically difficult. Being stranded in a large house in a sparsely populated area outside San Antonio, Texas, without electricity during that state's 2020 freeze was disconcerting, as was the loss of in-person teaching due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Monday reevaluated what the future might hold for her as a maker and teacher. Changes needed to be made.

The decision was made to move to a smaller home with a converted studio shed measuring twelve by twenty feet in town. This change represented a significant downscaling from the large thirty by twenty foot studio inside a country house's two-car garage that could accommodate large print tables, dye areas, ample storage, and room for eight students. Monday found it necessary to focus on what she really used. Some decisions were easy. She was no longer interested in making or teaching batik, so those materials were donated. She also downsized the number of screen-printing materials and recycled-fabric collections, as more are always available. Letting go of sixty years' of journals, sketchbooks, and drawings was much more difficult, so she kept some with the idea to store and catalog the images electronically. Monday also made concessions on space by including a Bernina sit-down longarm, as it significantly lowers the stress on hands and wrists while quilting.

A proponent of technology advances, Monday was an early adopter of the value that the iPad offered as a design tool. That shift allowed her to not only bypass the physical stress and toll on her body,

but also as a teacher she was easily able to transition from in-person to online teaching workshops which reached a wider number of students than would ordinarily be possible in her former studio.

As an artist, Monday's collage work has shifted from the years of labor-intensive and physically exhausting hands-on process to designing with apps (Pixlr, Color Thief, and Drawing Pad) on her iPad. Photos can now easily be manipulated by changing colors, shape, scale, etc. Once a collage has been created the image is then sized on her laptop to available width of fabric and sent to a printer such as Spoonflower. It takes about a week for the service to send the printed fabric to her, and she then further manipulates it with paint, hand embroidery, or even cutting it apart. The creative process is now a more positive experience. You can learn more on her website, www.susiemonday.com.

It is my hope that the ideas in this article inspire you to take a closer look at your own studio space with an eye toward the future. Planning for the accommodations to your studio today will not only lengthen your career but make your creative process more efficient and productive now. ■

Lilo Bowman is the incoming 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.

Utilize stock kitchen cabinets to design a storage wall.

Image courtesy of Kimberly Einmo



Susie Monday's former studio allowed for large worktables for screen printing and student workshops.

Image courtesy of Susie Monday



The Kallax bookcase holds some of Candice Phelan's large fabric collection while obscuring the longarm behind it.

Image courtesy of Candice Phelan





Blair Treuer

Heartfelt art quilts bridge distinct cultures

Blair Treuer with 2023 installation

Photo by TJ Turner Pictures

by Cindy Grisdela

Blair Treuer came to quiltmaking through an unusual route. A self-taught artist from rural Minnesota, she began by creating pictorial blankets as part of traditional Native American ceremonies for each of her nine children.

She didn't know how to sew when she began, so she acquired a sewing machine, fabric, and thread, and started to experiment. Rather than using traditional quilt blocks for the ceremonial blankets, Treuer (pronounced TROY-er) chose to design pictures that depicted the Native American names her children were given at birth. "Because it was the only way I could contribute as a non-native woman, I poured everything I had into those offerings," she says.

These early experiments in fabric were figurative, but not portraiture. "Those images were very whimsical, and the figures were more like caricatures. I was thinking of them more like images a child would appreciate because they were the reflection of

the essence of my children and not a reflection of me or about me."

The blankets didn't need to be perfect; the point was the process of creating, not the end product, Treuer explains. Involving her children in the process as she went "created what felt natural in a way that felt instinctual to me, without any regard to what had been done in this field before me, because I didn't view myself as a quilter or an artist, just a mom cultivating a meaningful experience with my child."

After her youngest child went through her ceremony, Treuer found that a decade of making had given her "an immersive love affair with fabric, and a hunger to see what I was capable of creating."

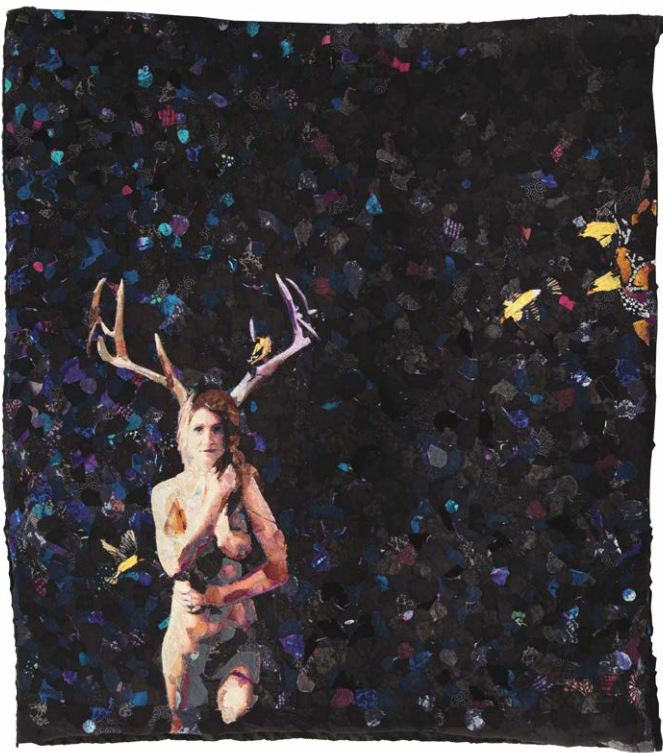
She began creating portraits intended to be displayed in galleries in 2018 and had her first solo exhibition in 2020. She has exhibited steadily ever since and received one of two McKnight Fellowships for Fiber Artists in 2022. That program awards

two \$25,000 fellowships each year to individual fiber artists living and working in Minnesota.

Treuer thinks of herself as a storyteller who paints with fabric and draws with thread. She lives in Bemidji, a rural area of northern Minnesota, with her husband Anton, who is a professor of American Indian Studies and cultural activist for the Ojibwe Tribal Community, and their family.

"My portraits explore intimate parts of my life and center on the juxtaposition between my white culture and my husband's traditional indigenous culture, and continue to express a range of challenging topics concerning today's society, with spirituality woven into their narratives."

Treuer's first attempt at a portrait was one of herself. It was a struggle to create, because she was overcritical of herself and her work. It took about four months, and she ripped it up nine times. *Self Portrait* is 54 x 48 x 6 inches. "Once I let go of my intellect and let my instincts take



Self Portrait

54 x 48 x 6 inches | 137 x 122 x 15 cm | 2018

Photo by Monika Lawrence



To Gather Your Resources and Be Thoughtful and Intentional Towards the Future—A Lesson from the Chipmunks

50 x 48 x 4 inches | 127 x 122 x 10 cm | 2021

Photo by Rik Sferra

over, this portrait blossomed before my eyes and I realized that not only can I do this, but I should do this, because what I was creating was special.” This piece has won awards and been exhibited nationally and internationally.

This initial series of work encompasses portraits of herself, her husband, and all of their children, eleven subjects in all.

Treuer’s process is different from that of many quilt artists. She terms it machine-sewn, appliquéd collage because she uses a painterly approach to the work. Always beginning with the face, she cuts small pieces of fabric and applies them to a base as though they were brushstrokes, layering them as needed. There is no paint involved. Treuer uses wire to make many of the pieces three-dimensional. Most have irregular edges. *To Gather Your Resources and Be Thoughtful and Intentional Towards the Future—A Lesson from the Chipmunks* is round in shape, with the child in the center

of the piece seemingly ready to jump out of the frame.

In the spirit of reusing and recycling materials, the base of each piece might be an old sheet, a worn-out shower curtain, or even clothes or costumes that her children have

outgrown. A piece in progress in Treuer’s studio photo shows how the process begins. She works on a table, rather than a design wall, in part because her studio is in the loft of her home and doesn’t have straight walls.



Blair Treuer’s loft studio



To Become a Flower

49 x 27 x 8 inches | 124 x 69 x 20 cm | 2020

Photo by Rik Sferra



To Never Lose Sight of Those Most Vulnerable—A Lesson from the Birds

53 x 55 x 4 inches | 135 x 140 x 10 cm | 2021

Photo by Rik Sferra

She uses many different types of materials and fabrics in her work, including sequins, velvet, metallics, and fleece, in addition to woven fabrics and fabrics that are donated to her. “The texture and depth and sparkle that I’m able to incorporate in my work really excites me, and every inch of my portrait has an interesting fabric to look at.”

Her first workspace was the kitchen table, which was a challenge with children at home. As a stay-at-home mom, it took her some time to carve out space for her artistic practice, but eventually she repurposed her home’s loft into a studio. “My studio is tiny, and it barely suits my needs, but I love working from home too much to find a different space.”

An unusual aspect of Treuer’s studio is her fabric storage system. She

uses very small pieces in her work, and if she purchases fabric, it’s normally not more than one-eighth of a yard. The challenge is finding what she needs when she needs it. Treuer came up with the idea of wrapping the fabric around wooden dowels secured by rubber bands. The dowels are stored standing up in baskets that line the base of the loft walls. The system is decorative, almost like fabric bouquets, but functional because she can easily see the fabric she has when she is working on a project.

Treuer’s second body of work is titled *BECOMING: The Transition from Childhood to Womanhood*. It is comprised of twenty-seven textiles celebrating her thirteen-year-old daughter’s passage from girlhood to womanhood. As a Native American

girl, Treuer’s daughter participated in a ceremony when she got her first menstrual period that celebrated her rite of passage as sacred, Treuer says. That was so different from the experience Treuer and other women she knew experienced at a similar time in their lives, that Treuer felt compelled to commemorate it in her work. “It inspired me to explore cultural views, attitudes, and communications regarding the physical transitions of the female body, definitions of womanhood and femininity, and ultimately the teachings we share with our daughters about what it means to have a female body, and how to protect and celebrate it in today’s society.”

To Become a Flower is a piece from the *BECOMING* series. In it, Treuer’s daughter can be seen peering shyly from the center of the piece, with just



To Be Aware that You Impact Everyone You Touch—A Lesson From the Bees

50 x 50 x 5 inches | 127 x 127 x 13 cm | 2021

Photo by Rik Sferra



To Trust and Be Trusted, and to recognize that you're not Alone—A Lesson From the Wolves

59 x 61 x 4 inches | 150 x 155 x 10 cm | 2022

Photo by Rik Sferra

the face, one hand, one arm and shoulder and part of the torso visible. She seems to be emerging from the dark background.

Another piece is *To Trust and Be Trusted, and to recognize that you're not Alone—A Lesson From the Wolves*. In it, the girl is resting, perhaps asleep, with a pack of wolves around her. Both the child and the wolves are beautifully depicted in various poses, and the subtle contrast in color and value between the hues of the child and those of the wolves draws the viewer's eye into the scene. More pieces in the series describe lessons from birds, fish, and bees.

This series took three years to complete and was exhibited at the Textile Center in Minneapolis in early 2023 as part of Treuer's McKnight Fellowship award.

Treuer's unique place in her family and her community has an outsized impact on her art. "As the only white person in my Native American family, my work is about my reflections as an outsider and the emotional roller-coaster I often ride as I stand fixed on the outside of the cultural and spiritual experiences of my husband and children, but privileged enough to look in." That experience allows her to see herself in a new light, as well as give her perspective to comment on mainstream American cultural norms in an original way.

Treuer's advice to other artists is to follow their heart and their instincts. "Create work that's meaningful to you, and don't be afraid to make mistakes, or experiment."

Her strategy for sharing her work with others has been to say yes to

See "Blair Treuer" on page 33



To Entertain Multiple Points of View—A Lesson from the Fish

49 x 36 x 4 inches | 124 x 91 x 10 cm | 2021

Photo by Rik Sferra

Blue Review



Jeanne Marklin

The World Turned Upside Down

50 x 32 inches | 127 x 81 cm | 2017

Elisabeth Nacenta de la Croix

Le Grand Bleu

31 x 41 inches | 79 x 104 cm | 2022

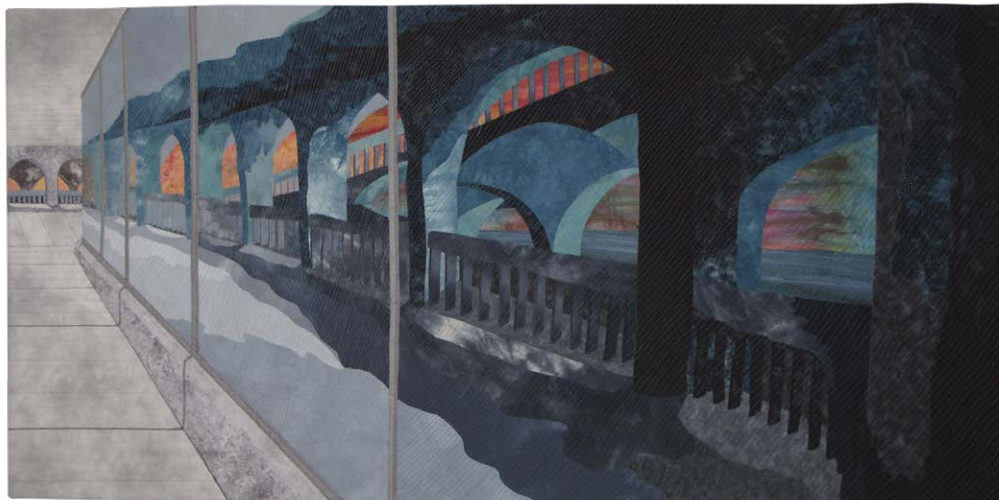
Photo by Olivier Junod



Judith Ahlborn

Blue Dresses from Greece

8 x 10 inches | 20 x 25 cm | 2019



Donna Deaver

Reflection #7

32 x 63 inches | 81 x 160 cm | 2013



Linda Syverson Guild

Minnesota Sunrise

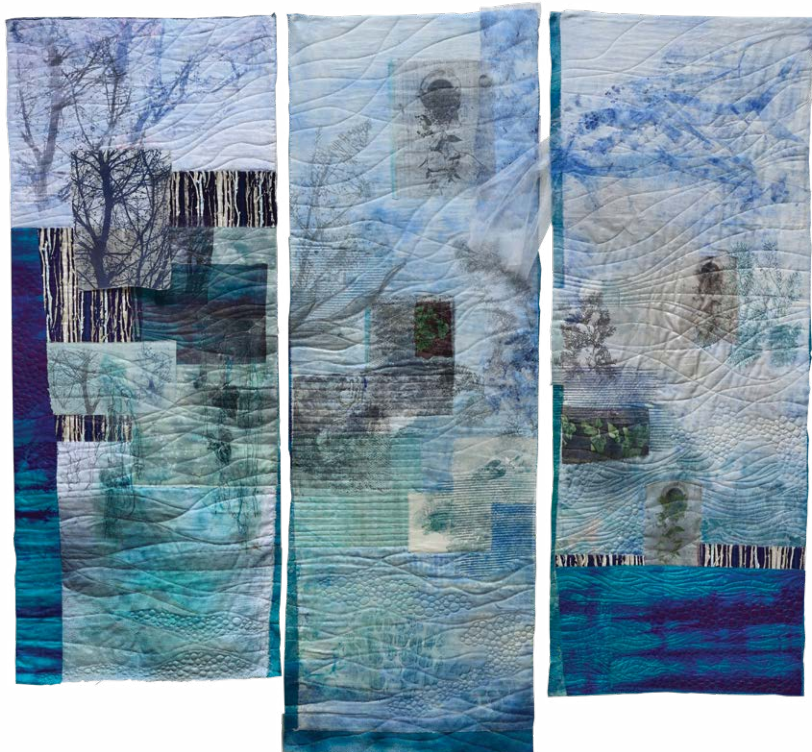
20 x 20 inches | 51 x 51 cm | 2017



Hiroko Fukuda

Light Behind the Clouds

71 x 31.5 inches | 180 x 80 cm | 2022

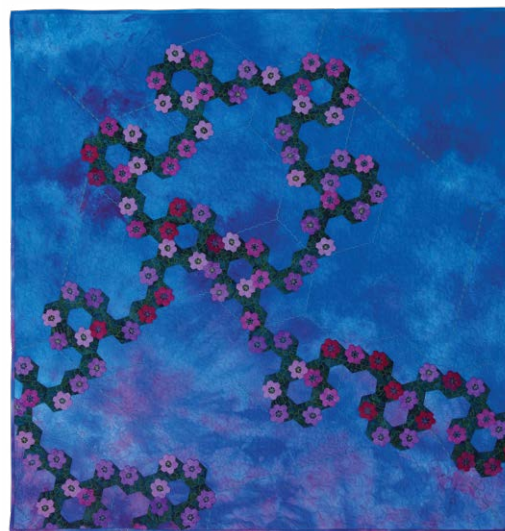


Ryoko Kobayashi

Blown by the wind, from water to sky

60 x 63 inches | 152 x 160 | 2021

Photo by Akinori Miyashita



Pat Forster

Granny's Pond

37 x 35 inches | 94 x 89 cm | 2016

RASTER VERSUS VECTOR ART

What's the best digital format?

by Kestrel Michaud

A difficult task can be made easier by choosing the right tool for the job, and the same principle applies to digital art software. Not all graphics programs are made equal. I personally believe that a tool should only ever support—never hinder—an artist's creative process. When it comes to software, that means knowing the differences between graphics programs so you can use the one that makes the most sense for your purpose.

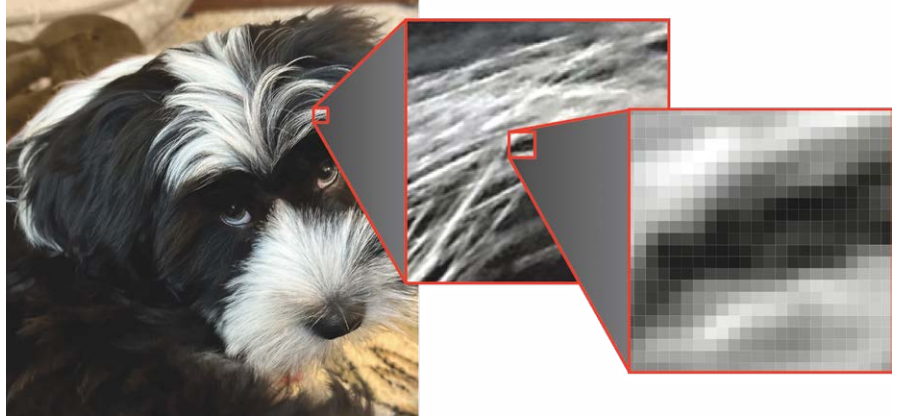
Digital artwork comes in two different formats: raster and vector. Graphics software is built from the ground up with these formats in mind, meaning some software is raster-based while others are vector-based. Understanding the difference between these two formats, and knowing the software that's designed to support each, is critical to success.

Raster vs Vector

Raster images are made up of pixels. Pixels are tiny square blocks, each containing only one color, that collectively form an image, just like how colored tiles are combined to form a mosaic. A raster image is made up of thousands or millions of pixels that all work together to create the picture.

Figure 1 shows a picture of my dog, Yoda. This photo contains 9 million pixels. If we zoom in on the image, each little block of color—each pixel—eventually becomes visible.

“Resolution” is the term used to describe the density of pixels within an image. Generally speaking, the higher the resolution of an image, the more detail it contains. The file size



Raster images are made of millions of blocks of color called “pixels” arranged in a grid. The grid of pixels becomes visible when zoomed very close to the photo of Yoda.



Vector images are based on mathematical equations and do not contain pixels. When zooming in for a closer look, Yoda's vector lines stay crisp and sharp.

of an image (the amount of storage space it takes up in the computer) is determined by the number of pixels it contains; the physical size of an image is determined by its resolution.

On the other hand, vector artwork doesn't contain any pixels at all. Vector artwork uses mathematical equations and fixed points on a grid to produce what we see as lines and curves in a design. Simply put, vector artwork is line art. It's a visual series of shapes, outlines, and fill colors that combine to make the visual art.

Figure 2 shows a vector drawing of Yoda. Unlike the photograph in Figure 1, this vector drawing of Yoda is made entirely of lines and colored fills. If we zoom in, we get closer and closer to the line art, but it never devolves into pixels. We see a nice, crisp line at every zoom level.

Why use raster art?

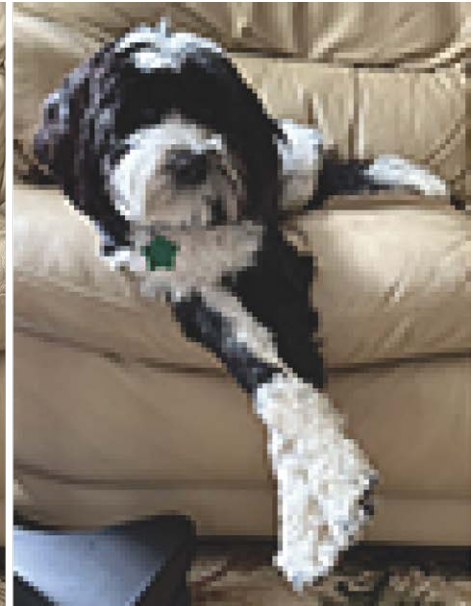
Raster images are the more common of the two file formats mostly because of photos. All photographs are raster images, because raster images

support visually complex art. Any artwork that has complex and subtle variations in color, value, texture, and shading will look better as a raster file. The grid of pixels making up raster images can capture those differences while the mathematical equations of vector art cannot.

Consequently, raster-based drawing programs provide the most realistic simulated drawing and painting experience. Apps like Procreate can simulate the texture of drawing surfaces like paper or canvas, have numerous brushes that imitate real artistic tools, and can even blend color as it's being applied to the canvas. As someone who grew up using physical media and now draws exclusively on my iPad, the experience of drawing in the Procreate app is as lifelike as I think it's possible to be without going back to actual paints and pencils.

The big downside to raster images is that their fidelity is intrinsically tied to resolution. Images with low resolution (implying low pixel density and low number of pixels within the image) contain less detail, meaning the overall quality of the image is poor. Images with high resolution contain more detail—possibly by orders of magnitude—and consequently have much higher image quality.

Raster images can be reduced in size (have pixels removed) without significant degradation in image quality, but the reverse is not true. Using photo-editing software to “scale up” a raster image by generating more pixels will greatly reduce image quality because although the software is capable of creating more pixels, it doesn't understand how they should be colored in order to increase clarity and fidelity. The



A “high resolution” image contains more pixels densely packed. A “low resolution” image contains few pixels loosely packed. These two versions of the same photo of Yoda demonstrate the difference (high resolution on the left, low resolution on the right).

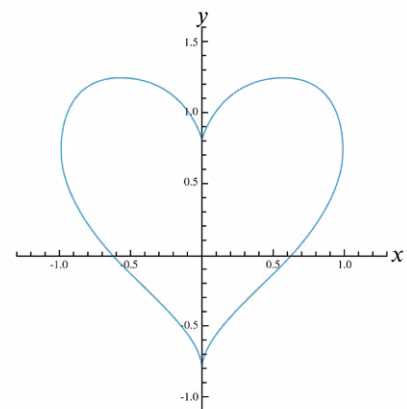
software can't create detail that doesn't already exist in the image. This is the reason the “zoom and enhance” trope used in CSI television shows—when the good guys are able to get crystal clear pictures of a bad guy's face or license plate from dark and blurry security camera footage—is an internet meme.

One last consideration when working with raster images is that the files can get very large, especially for images that have high resolution. More pixels mean more data, and more data means more bytes required to store that information. Most photos taken with my cell phone's camera are about four megabytes in size. The full-size photos I have of my finished art quilts are hundreds of megabytes in size.

Why use vector art?

Vector art is ideal for simple graphics that consist primarily of lines, shapes, and fill colors. The mathematical formulas that enable the creation of vector art cannot support more complex images, so simplified designs are a necessity. However, what vector

$$x^2 + \left(\frac{5y}{4} - \sqrt{|x|}\right)^2 = 1$$



When mathematical equations are plotted on a graph, they form an image. This is the basis for how vector artwork is created. In this simple example, the above equation can be graphed to form a heart shape.

images lack in complexity they make up for in versatility.

Because vector graphics do not have pixels, they are not constrained by resolution. Mathematical formulas can recalibrate to any size, meaning vector artwork can be freely scaled up or down, to an infinite degree, with no degradation in image quality.

Another big advantage to vector artwork is its editability. A line (and

any other shape) drawn in vector software is backed by a mathematical formula that tells the computer what it is. A user can select and edit that line or shape specifically, using editing features offered by the software. For example, the vector drawing app, Concepts App, allows users to select individual lines (or an entire drawing) and scale, skew, warp, or nudge to their heart's content. This flexibility is fundamentally impossible for raster images.

One last thing to know about these two formats: Vector art can always be converted to raster, but converting raster into vector is not always a clean and easy process. Vector software generally offers an option to export vector artwork as a raster file, which

in a nutshell converts the math into a grid of pixels. On the other hand, when raster art is converted into vector art, the computer has to use its best judgement to reduce the complexity of the raster art and convert it into mathematical-based graphics. This is much more difficult, and does not always produce a clean result.

Which is better?

The truth is that both image formats excel at different things. Neither is a universal solution, although one or the other may be better in certain situations.

For example, I like to use vector art for the majority of my quilt designs because I cut my fabrics using a cutting machine, and the cutting machine's software can interpret vector art. This allows me to send my files directly to the cutting machine and the cut lines are smooth because the machine can understand the math underlying the art.

But I also like to draw more detailed art in Procreate. When drawing portraits, I often do a simple line drawing in Concepts, copy my drawing into Procreate (which effectively converts my line drawing into raster art), and continue coloring the rest of the portrait using the full range of texture and color gradients provided by a raster-based app. I have then printed my digital portraits on fabric and incorporated them into my quilts to give a more realistic effect.

Getting comfortable with both styles of graphic art and the apps that support them will make for the best, and most efficient, drawing experience. ■

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



This demonstration shows what happens when a vector image (top) is converted to raster (middle) and then converted back to vector (bottom). A vector image can always be converted to raster without loss of image quality, provided the raster image is suitably high resolution. However, converting a raster image into vector will almost always cause problems. In this example, the bottom butterfly's curves aren't as clean, the points aren't as sharp, and some of the yellow and blue dots of color along the edges of the wings have been completely lost in the conversion.

Resources

Software Programs (not an exhaustive list)

Raster: Procreate (mobile)

Raster: Art Rage (mobile)

Raster: Adobe Photoshop*/Photoshop Express (desktop)

Raster: GIMP (desktop)

Raster: Affinity Photo (desktop & mobile)

Raster: CorelPHOTO (desktop)

Vector: Concepts App (mobile)

Vector: Adobe Illustrator* (desktop)

Vector: InkScape (desktop)

Vector: CorelDRAW (desktop)

Vector: Affinity Designer (desktop & mobile)

File Types (most common)

Raster: JPG, PNG, TIFF, PSD

Vector: SVG, EPS, AI**

* Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator do have mobile apps, but they are not full-featured and function a little differently versus their desktop versions. Affinity Photo and Designer are the same applications on mobile versus desktop.

** Adobe Illustrator's proprietary file format (.AI) supports features that are available in Illustrator but are not available in other vector programs nor supported by SVG and EPS file formats. For example: SVG and EPS file types do not support Layers, but AI files do. An AI file with multiple layers that is converted into an SVG or EPS will have all of those layers automatically compressed onto one single layer.

StitchPUNK

An innovative exhibition that opens the imagination

By Patty Kennedy-Zafred



Kate Crossley

Minerva. *StitchPunk Warrior*

50 x 25 x 14 inches | 127 x 64 x 36 cm | 2023

SAQA's *StitchPunk* exhibition provides a new vision and broad interpretation to the artistic possibilities that can celebrate new realities in science fiction. Juried by artist-entrepreneur Cheryl Sleboda, whose inspiration includes pop culture and fantasy, twenty-seven works were selected which fascinate and surprise the viewer.

As Sleboda says, the heart of *StitchPunk* is to consider “what if” and see how unique materials and innovative techniques express a personal vision. Most of the works submitted for consideration were created specifically for this exhibition, which premieres April 30, 2024, at New England Quilt Museum in Lowell, Massachusetts.

StitchPunk features an inventive combination of both two- and three-dimensional works, that are thoughtful, delightful, and expertly created. Sculptural forms take center stage, as exemplified by Kate Crossley's *Minerva. StitchPunk Warrior*, a complex assemblage of found objects that included tubing, buckles, rivets and grommets. To build the piece required hand and machine stitching as well as hat making. This creature, made as a tribute to the artist's mother and grandmother, was also inspired by those “warrior stitch” women in her life.



Kathy Knapp
Steampunk Alice

Detail

Equally magical is Kathy Knapp's *Steampunk Alice*, an edgy suit and bag featuring a geared heart and multiple unique embellishments. Surface-design techniques abound, including piecing, quilting, beading, fabric manipulation, and use of upcycled denim and vintage ribbons.

Libby Williamson takes a *Road Trip*, creating a flock of misfit birds in search of a new land. Various gadgets and machines are combined to create this adventurous convoy—utilizing quilting, hand embroidery, metalworking, and woodworking—to design a piece that exceeds six feet in length.

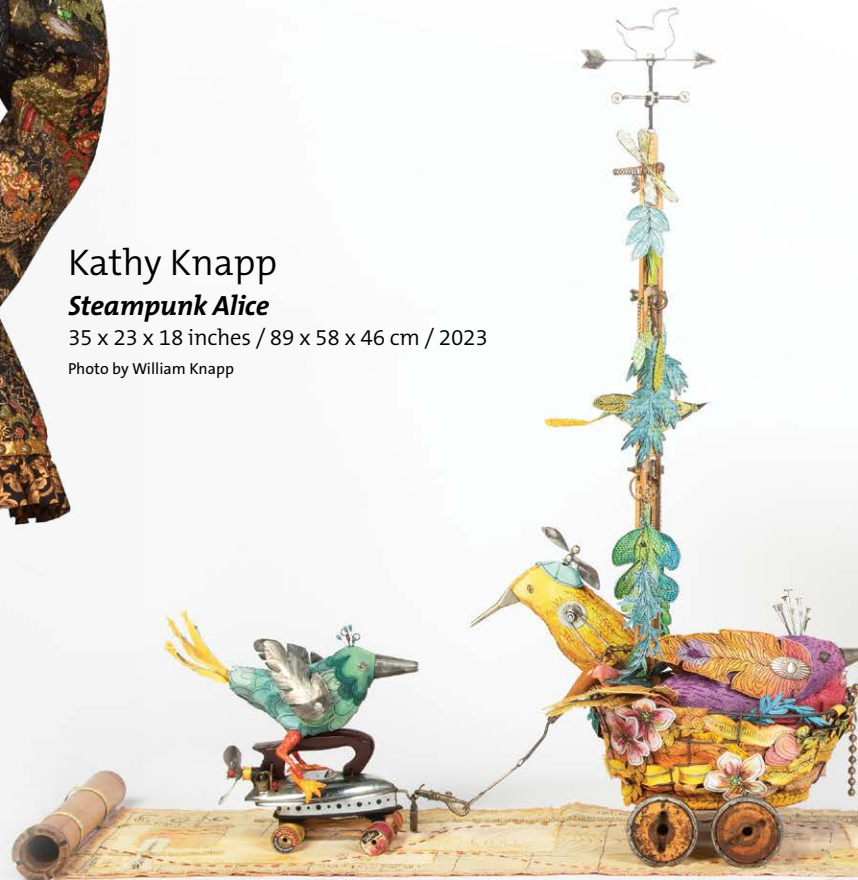
Rose and Jason, by Kestrel Michaud, portrays a “quintessential Steampunk couple and their mechanical pets, who sail the skies for the glory of Queen and country.”



Kathy Knapp
Steampunk Alice

35 x 23 x 18 inches / 89 x 58 x 46 cm / 2023

Photo by William Knapp





Kestrel Michaud

Rose and Jason

52 x 53 inches | 132 x 135 cm | 2019

Michaud's diptych is comprised of thousands of small colorful appliqué pieces that capture attention with concept, amazing assemblage, and realism.

Kathy Nida also relies on multiple and sometimes miniature fused pieces in her *Woman Version 3.0*. This piece is a cyber-engineered woman who can incorporate technology directly into her body, including the addition of an oft-needed extra arm. This part robot, but clearly feminine creature, asks "what if" in a serious yet delightful manner.

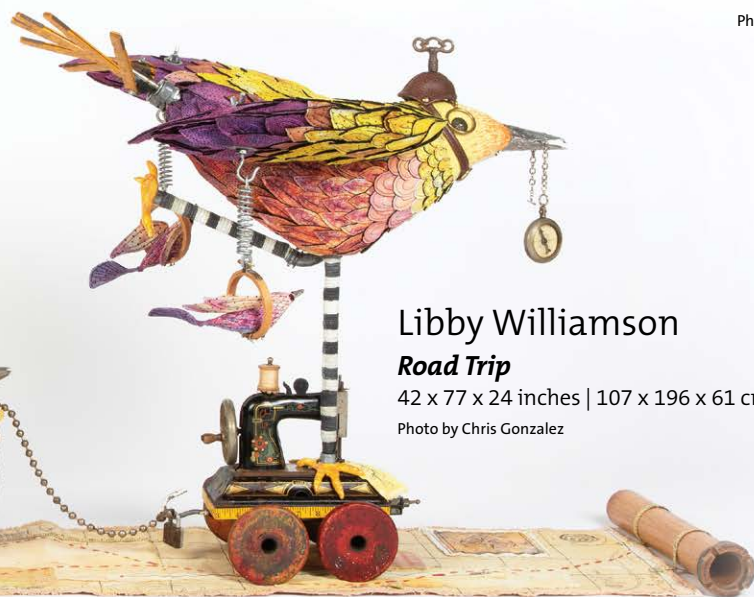
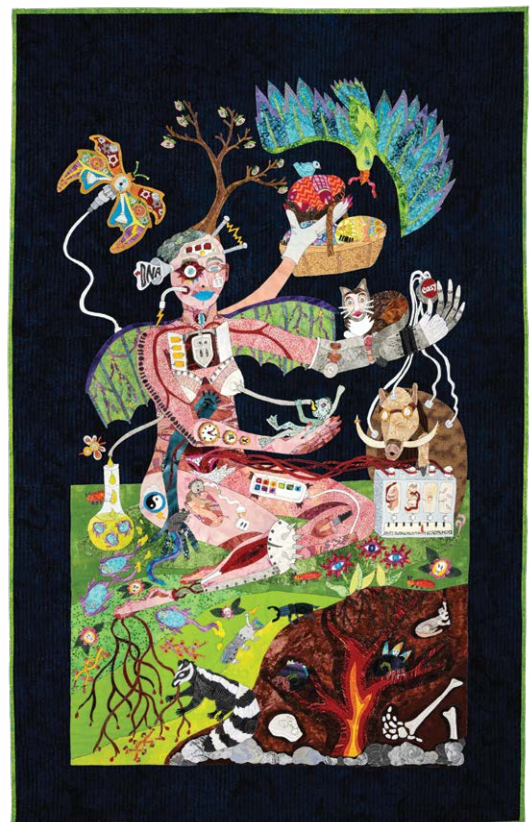
Based on a recent sighting of rock-hopper penguins while traveling, Sue Sherman considered their lives could be a bit easier with a jet pack, in *Rockethopper*. A flying penguin would definitely be a surprise in the sky, yet Sherman's will remain on the wall, crafted with various dyes,

Kathy Nida

Woman Version 3.0

72 x 46 inches | 183 x 117 cm | 2023

Photo by Gary Conaughton



Libby Williamson

Road Trip

42 x 77 x 24 inches | 107 x 196 x 61 cm | 2023

Photo by Chris Gonzalez



Sue Sherman

Rockethopper

54 x 54 inches | 137 x 137 cm | 2023

paints, and fabrics that sparkle and illuminate.

Imagine the world with not only flying penguins, but a gigantic mechanical elephant, capable of carrying forty-nine passengers! Lena Meszaros was inspired by the imaginary machines of Jules Verne and Leonardo da Vinci in her meticulously created *The Mechanical Elephant*. Integrating a multitude of materials and techniques, this piece is stunning in both concept and detail.

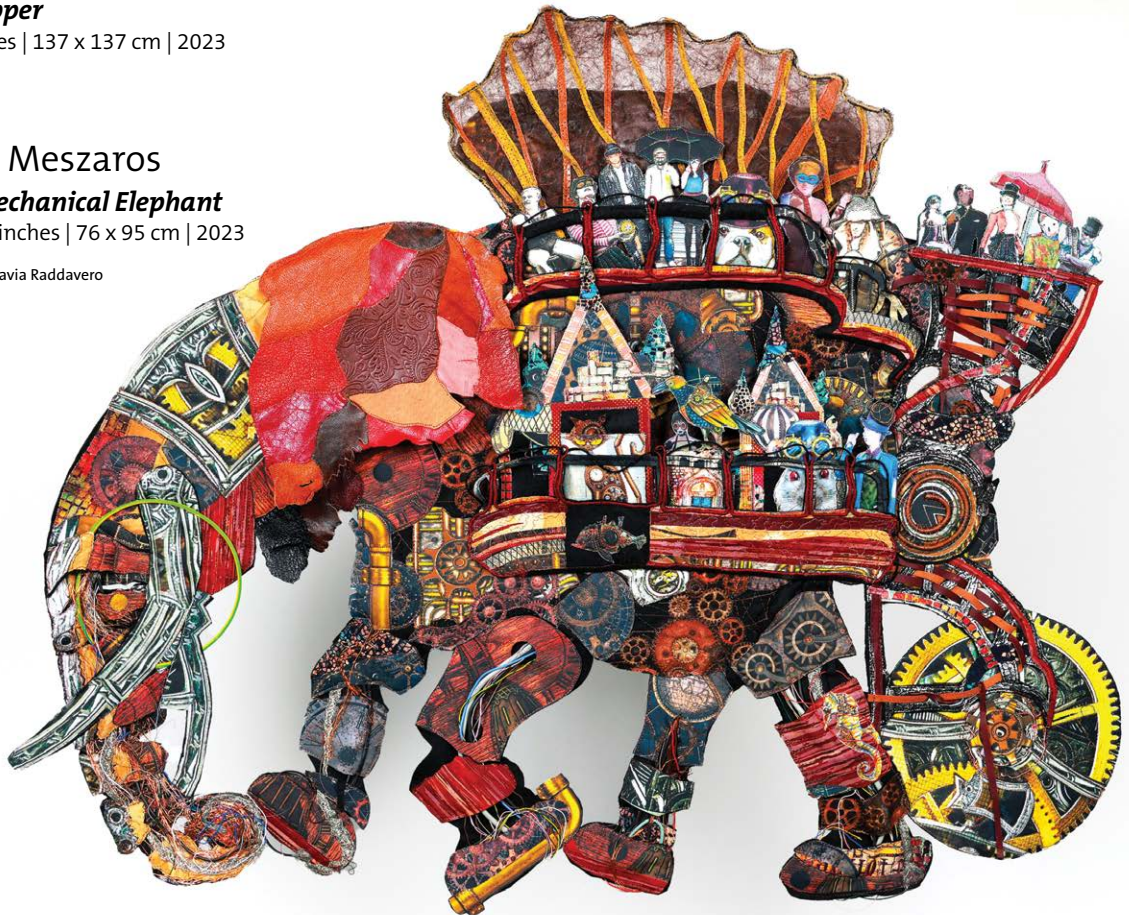
Lana Dragon takes us on a ride to a futuristic car show in *Gulf PunkPump & Popcorn Machine*, one in a series she refers to as *CartReals*. Combining realistic imagery with cartoon elements, her vintage gas pump also

Lena Meszaros

The Mechanical Elephant

30 x 37 inches | 76 x 95 cm | 2023

Photo by Flavia Raddavero



makes popcorn with a multitude of flavor options.

As reflected in these selections, the entire *StitchPunk* exhibition will surely delight and amaze visitors of all ages and interests, and will leave the viewer with a clear answer to the “what if” possibilities of working with fiber, textiles, and even gears.

To see all of the pieces in this exhibition and to see where it will be installed next, visit saqa.com/stitchpunk. The exhibition will tour through December 2027. ■

Patty Kennedy-Zafred is a SAQA Juried Artist who resides in southwestern Pennsylvania. You can view her work at www.pattykz.com.



Lana Dragon

Gulf PunkPump & Popcorn Machine

Left: Detail, Right: 49 x 24 inches | 125 x 61 cm | 2023

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Workshop trends a mixed bag post-pandemic, but it's all good

by Diane Howell

We have lived through the Covid-19 pandemic, when in-person classes stopped for fear of infection. Our need for human contact was so palpable that we embraced video conferencing with the intensity usually reserved for survival-of-the-fittest contests.

So now what? We can meet in real life (IRL), where we enjoy strong camaraderie, or we can learn online from our studios where we have everything we need to work with. Numerous conversations with teachers and students make it clear that we are going to embrace both formats for different reasons. Lyric Montgomery Kinard astutely sums up the situation: "Teaching has evolved and grown. Both formats will always have wonderful advantages and always be available to creative learners. It's been a boon for accessibility to be able to offer online learning in addition to live classes."

Evolutionary path

As online teaching became the standard during Covid-19, it was business as usual for some, including the multitalented Ricky Tims. "I started online teaching in 2014 when I created my own website for doing just that, www.letsquilt-together.com. These original offerings were for various projects and packaged as 'self-guided.' Once purchased, they live in that person's account library forever."

Tims also held popular in-person classes, including at a venue he recently sold in LaVeta, Colorado.

He was at ease with online teaching because he knew how to put together all the elements. "I have longtime experience in all the areas needed to pull it off: website editing, video shooting and editing, camera and audio technology, and marketing."

Tims started online teaching because of a selfish reason: he likes being home. He also loves that in his online classes, students aren't trying to keep up with others, and that students have full access to all of their studio supplies. "Most of my current classes (since 2019) have been interactive, so the students are getting one-on-one guidance from me. Everyone in the class sees the progress of their classmates—and there is interaction—so it's not like taking a self-guided class and being isolated on an island. It is inspiring to see what others are doing."

He markets his classes through his newsletter, social media, live events, and on blogs and newsletters produced by TheQuiltShow.com, which he co-hosts with Alex Anderson.

"Covid definitely played a role in how I have moved forward and online classes have been my survival." Now that IRL classes are back, he teaches live, but not as frequently, another result of the pandemic. "Age plays a role too. Many in my generation are looking at retiring (not me), but due to age the rigors of travel become less appealing. So I pick and choose where I will go and how often."

Pandemic push

For Cindy Griselda of Reston, Virginia, the pandemic was the first

time she taught online. Her experience is a typical journey taken the past few years. "In March 2020 all my contracts were being canceled, and one guild in New York asked me if I knew anything about teaching online. I didn't, but I learned fast and taught my first class on Zoom to that guild in April 2020."

The efficiency of Zoom was obvious. "After that first experience, I learned as much as I could about teaching on Zoom and marketing myself as an online teacher. I was busier in 2020 and 2021 than I had ever been pre-pandemic."

Today, her calendar is a mix of online and IRL classes. She recently taught live at that first guild and enjoyed meeting its members in person. "I find that some guilds and groups, like Mancuso's Virtual Schoolhouse, still want virtual options. Maybe [others] have weather concerns in the winter for bringing teachers and lecturers in or having their members drive in bad weather. Or maybe they are smaller guilds with lower budgets who can save on travel, food, and hotel costs by doing virtual events.

"I'm also taking the opportunity to host my own virtual classes. Students sign up and pay through my website and I send a link out about a week before the first class. Typically these are multiday events [that] give students time to work on their projects in between sessions."

Griselda has become a big fan of online courses. "For the students, they are usually in their own sewing space, they have the machine they



Ricky Tims



Deborah Fell



Cindy Grisdel



Kevin Womack



Lyric Montgomery Kind

normally work on and their chair at a comfortable height, and they have their fabric stash nearby if they decide to change fabric choices once class starts. And there's no waiting for an iron!"

Online courses are physically less draining for everyone. "For me as a teacher, the biggest benefit is not having to lug fifty-pound suitcases through airports. I can do more teaching virtually because I don't have to allow time for travel and packing/unpacking on both sides of a trip—that's usually at least a day before and a day after, and sometimes more if the guild is far away. I can also teach internationally fairly easily with virtual options, and I have done quite a bit of that in the last few years," Grisdel says.

Setting the stage

Lyric Montgomery Kinard recognized the need to be ready for online teaching and was producing videos in her studio prior to the pandemic. But as it became obvious there was a growing demand for online education, she opened the Academy for Virtual Teaching, with a website of the same name. Here, creative makers learn to use virtual technology so that they can offer workshops to a worldwide audience. The need to learn these skills continues post-pandemic.

"Guilds that embraced virtual technology during lockdown are thriving. Guilds that can offer hybrid programs are able to keep members that are homebound or move away by letting them Zoom in each month. Some

guilds are continuing to offer Zoom workshops so that members don't have to pack up half their studio, but still offer monthly in-person social gatherings. Many guilds are permanently offering virtual-only programs during the months with poor winter driving conditions. That doesn't even count the ease of access individuals have to live and on-demand virtual courses offered by teachers all over the world," Kinard says.

Through on-demand courses—which make use of premade videos—learners can access educational content at their own pace, often with access to the instructor when questions arise. The view is a front-row ticket, Kinard notes. "They don't have to struggle to hear or see what is being taught."

Different communication skills are needed to teach online. "You can't just look over [students'] shoulders to see what they are doing, so the [online] teacher must be able to draw out each student, guiding them in different ways to show you where they are in their process or to let you know what they are struggling with. For a live Zoom class the teacher must be proficient with camera and lighting technology in order to be able to clearly present their techniques," Kinard says.

When Kinard teaches live Zoom workshops, she often provides extra online course material for a set period, which allows students to review techniques and ask follow-up questions. She has seen teachers who lead IRL classes offer additional online content as a bonus.

A new playbook

As with many experienced teachers, Kinard enjoys but limits her in-person teaching opportunities. "I still love them but can be a little bit choosier. I can accept virtual engagements almost without limit, plugging them in easily because I don't have to take so many extra days away from my family."

Kevin Womack has a different approach with an eye to a virtual future. "I did not teach online before the pandemic, so it was a means to an end during the shutdown. I much prefer teaching in person. I value the interpersonal connections and it is easier for me to gauge when I need to step in and help and encourage the student in person. Many times, when teaching over Zoom, I stared at a host of blank screens, in a mostly-quiet environment, as students printed fabrics or worked on exercises.

"That being said, having to present over Zoom forced me to prepare virtual workshops and lectures. When I do retire from teaching on the road in the next few years, I will have the resources to offer the occasional virtual event."

Deborah Fell keeps her focus on in-person workshops. "Teaching informs my practice. It allows me to see my own work through the eyes of others. My art practice is incomplete without teaching. I would like to give a shout-out to all of the workshop venue administrators. Any administration job can be difficult, and organizers of workshops are gifts. I have met the most extraordinary people through my workshop teaching. These are some of the most

What you said

Those who answered a Facebook appeal for comments provided great insight into attitudes toward online and in-person classes. While some respondents had strong preferences for one teaching format, it's clear that both formats are in demand. Here's what you had to say:

Lisa Call

Paraparaumu, New Zealand

Artist Lisa Call has been teaching her *Working in a Series* course online for thirteen years. "The students in the online class end up with better results as creating a series takes time. A week is simply not enough time to cover all of the material I like to cover. The key is small, small classes and interactive Zoom calls where each person gets individual attention."

Sandy Paananen

Augusta, South Carolina

I am a lifelong student and have taken numerous classes in person and through Zoom. Both are great, but I got more out of the Zoom class due to being home. I don't have to travel, pack up anything and [don't forget] some essential tool. Most times Zoom is cheaper than in person.

Christine Hager-Braun

Durham, North Carolina

I prefer to teach in person, especially free-motion quilting and quilting with a walking foot. My classes are for beginners and being able to observe every student ... allows me to give customized feedback immediately.

Marijke van Welzen

Vlaardingen, the Netherlands

In person is my favorite way to teach,



Anke Veltien was a student in Marijke Van Welzen's Jacket with a Story class, an in-person course held in Enschede, the Netherlands. Students created an appliqué to add to an already-made jacket.

especially my two-day class, Jacket with a Story to Tell. It is always great to interact with the students. I keep the group small, seven or eight students maximum, so that I can give them all the attention they need.

During Covid-19, I resorted to teaching online. I made private facebook groups and posted information twice a week for five or six weeks with a couple of exercises the participants could do. They posted what they had done and I gave feedback and tips.

Sue LaWall Cortese

Holland, Michigan

I definitely prefer in person. I learn from other students as well as the instructor. There is something very flat about online classes.

Phyllis Cullen

Ninole, Hawaii

I try to give my students everything I have, in person or via Zoom. It's easier to see

what my students are doing in person and interact with what is going on, but Zoom students can be slower, shyer, or do their own thing more easily.

Terry Howard Grant

Beaverton, Oregon

Online classes and in-person classes are two entirely different experiences for me. If I want to learn a technique or how to use a new tool, I am happy to find an online class. If I am a fan of a certain teacher and want the experience of watching her close-up and asking questions—and learning along with others—that can't be duplicated online!

Joke Buursma

Kilsheelan, Clonmel, Ireland

I teach in person only, just one small group once a week. I love it and I have no plans of doing it online.

important people in my life. It is a world I am honored to be a part of."

New business activity

Online classes have obviously created new opportunities. Grisdela says: "I have discovered new business avenues through offering on-demand classes with Creative Spark, the online learning platform of C&T Publishing, as well as hosting my own independent Zoom classes. With virtual options, I am able to reach more students all over the world, and I'm able to offer

more in-depth classes if I choose. I also work with a platform in the United Kingdom called Crafty Monkeys that does online classes—mostly for students in the UK and Europe, but also other international locations."

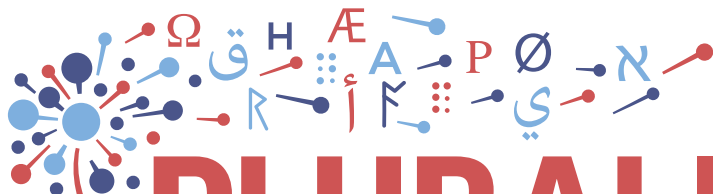
Tims says that teachers who want to enter online teaching need to learn how to shoot and edit video and pay attention to audio, a critical factor. "When I teach, my demos are pre-produced so I'm not having to worry about camera angles, flub-ups, broken threads, etc. Something

that would take thirty to forty minutes to actually do can be edited down to perhaps ten minutes. I do my lead-ins and after-video discussion live, but the actual 'doing' is prerecorded to make things time-efficient and smooth."

New traditions

Online teaching continues to evolve. In addition to her Academy for Virtual Teaching, Kinard established the Global Quilt Connection.

see "Workshop Trends" on page 35



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Capture true-to-life reflections through study of real life scenes

by Kestrel Michaud

A still life of shiny metal or reflective glassware is tough to capture in art. But it's one of those recurring subjects I was tasked with drawing in almost every art class I took while growing up. Reflected and refracted light is tricky because it requires a certain level of knowledge before accurate reproduction is possible. As students, we were required to sit and study the still life, figure out, and understand what was happening before finally drawing it on paper.

Trying to recreate accurate reflections in fabric adds a new dimension of complexity to the challenge. Let's take a look at three scenarios in which reflections occur: reflections on the ocean, reflections on still water, and reflections on glassware. I'll share how I either have already created or would create those examples in fabric.

My personal style usually leans closer to realism. But some of my work—including one example you'll see in this article—is less representational. Part of being an artist is knowing how to toe the line between realism and abstraction. How much can an object or effect be changed from how it appears in real life and still have the audience recognize it? If someone looking at my work can easily understand what's going on, I consider the design a success. I don't need my work to be hyper-realistic; it just needs to communicate effectively.

Note: I work with fused appliqué, which means I cut many pieces of fabric, arrange them into a design,



Dimensional waves are critical to the appearance of reflections in this sunset image.

Photo by Sebastien Gabriel via Unsplash

and use the heat from an iron to melt the fusible on the backs of the pieces, gluing the design together into a permanent, finished picture. The scenarios presented in this article are described with that technique in mind. However, fused appliqué is not the only method viable for creating reflections; it's simply the one I use and know best.

Ocean reflections

The ocean is always moving. Wind, wildlife, and watercraft all cause the surface of the water to ripple with waves. And waves, regardless of size, are not just cardboard cutouts popping up along the bottom of a puppet stage. Waves have shape, and their three-dimensional form

affects how reflections appear on the ocean's surface.

Using the example of a sunset over the ocean, the light of the sun reflects off the surface of the water. The dimensional waves are critical to the appearance of the reflection because only the top of each wave is being affected by the light. The lower part of the wave—the area that's in shadow—is not being directly hit by the sun's rays. Those shadows break up the reflection of the sun.

Additionally, the reflection is brightest in the center, the part of the water that's directly under and in front of the sun. Horizontally, the colors gradually darken to yellow,

then orange, then red the further away from the sun they get.

Despite analyzing real-life sunsets, I did not make a truly accurate one in *My Friend and the Setting Sun*. I was faced with two challenges when illustrating this quilt that greatly influenced how the reflective ocean was designed.

First: This composition is meant to depict the final scene from Nintendo's video game *Kirby Super Star*. Although the game itself was very low resolution, we can still tell that the white highlight from the sun extends across the entire horizon. I chose to match this element in my own quilt design to stay true to the source material, despite knowing that's not how sunset reflections work in real life.

Second: There's a hint that the tops of the waves are catching more light from the sun, but the resolution in the game was too low to see much detail. In my quilt, however, each wave in my ocean is made from a single piece of fabric, meaning there is no reflection along the top nor shadow area below. This decision was made due to the limitations of fabric as a medium. The pieces were getting small, and I didn't want a skinny little reflection to disintegrate when quilted.

Despite deviating from the appearance of a real-life sunset, my quilt design shares enough in common with the actual phenomenon to clearly communicate a sun sinking low over the ocean. I call it a success.

Still-water reflections

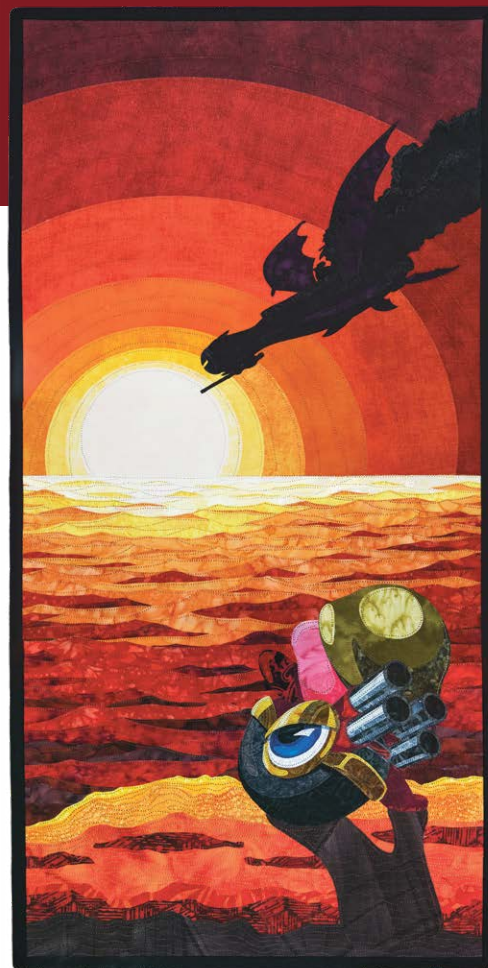
Sadly, I have far more ideas than time to create artwork, so I have not yet had a chance to create a quilt illustrating reflections on still water. But I have thought about how I would do it within my method of fused appliqué. This section goes beyond my physical creations and instead is an exercise in theorycrafting.

Unless you're looking at a salt flat after a rainstorm, any body of water is going to have a small amount of distortion on the surface. A subtle breeze, the water current, or movement of fauna below will cause ripples, and those ripples distort the otherwise glasslike surface reflecting objects outside the water.

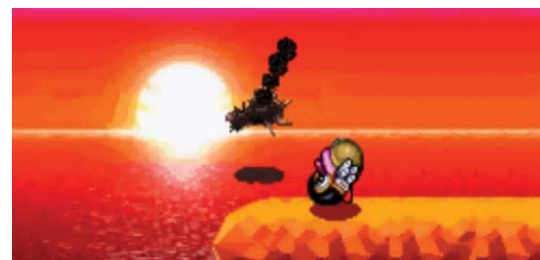
Look at the two photos of buildings reflected on water. In the first, the ripples are prominent, although not enough to be considered waves. These strong ripples affect the distortion in the reflection of the buildings. The crisp, straight edges of the buildings are very wavy, especially toward the bottom of the photo (which is farther away from the shore).

In contrast, the second image has almost no distortion at all. The reflection of the building is very smooth—until we look at the roof. The top edge of the reflected roof (close to the bottom of the photo) betrays the calm lines and shows that the water is in fact in motion.

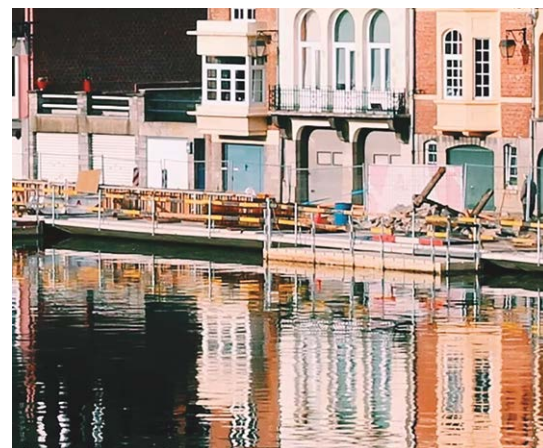
The distortion appears as a repetitive, horizontal wobble applied to reflected imagery. The amount of



My Friend and the Setting Sun LE 01/10
28 x 14 inches | 36 x 71 cm | 2021



Screenshot of Kirby Super Star by Nintendo



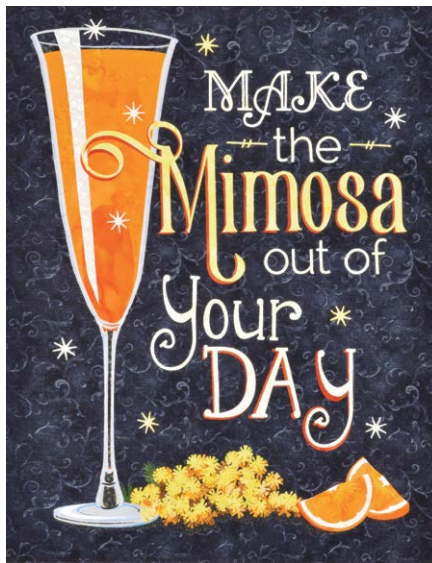
A crowded waterfront in Dinant, Belgium, offers varied reflection patterns.

Photo by Alex Vasey via Unsplash



A quieter setting at Wuling Farm in Taiwan offers subtle reflections.

Photo by Zion C via Unsplash



Make the Mimosa Out of Your Day
14 x 11 inches | 36 x 28 cm | 2017



Two flute glasses on white pavement were a study for the author's *Make the Mimosa Out of Your Day*.

Photo by Roan Lavery via Unsplash



Figure 1. This graphic illustrates how two factors—the distance the reflection is from the object being reflected and the severity of the ripples on the water's surface—determine reflection patterns on water.

distortion is affected by two factors: the distance the reflection is from the object being reflected and the severity of the ripples on the water's surface. Figure 1 is a drawing that illustrates this phenomenon in a very simplified graphic. Greater distance from the object and larger ripples both increase the amount of waviness.

When I finally make my own quilt that has reflections on water, I'm planning to use wavy reflections like these to help my viewers interpret what they're seeing. I want someone to know that they are looking at a reflection on water without necessarily being able to see the object being reflected.

reflection of the petals on the glass, and light green organza to simulate the white "tablecloth" surface reflected onto the bottom of the glass. Although I was very happy with the transparency of the vase, this picture was not quilted (other than the swirls in the background), and I really struggled with attaching the sheers. Overall, I personally feel this was a good first attempt and successful experiment, but there was room for improvement.

Years later, in 2017, I made *Make the Mimosa Out of Your Day*, or *Mimosa* for short. When working on this design, I studied another photo of champagne flutes and realized the glass had both external and internal reflections. The external reflections were reflected images, lights, or surroundings on the outside of the glass, most prominently seen on the portion containing the liquid. The internal reflections often reflected the liquid itself and occurred in the areas that had the thickest glass: the stem, the base, and in the curve of the side walls.

see "Reflections" on page 36



Happy Orchids
21 x 26 inches | 53 x 66 cm | 2009

Reflections on Glass

I have twice incorporated reflective glassware into pictures. The first time was almost two decades ago in college when I wanted to make a vase out of transparent colored glass. The result was *Happy Orchids*. I used three pieces of organza and tulle to simulate the transparent quality of the glass: green organza for the glass, red tulle for the

Blair Treuer

from page 13

everything, exhibiting wherever she can. Treuer says the response to her exhibitions so far has been unexpected as they create an emotional resonance with viewers. "My work continues to attract people who insist they are not art people, often bringing them into an art gallery for the very first time." Knowing that, she now sees herself as an ambassador of the art world to encourage others to view textile art as fine art and to use her artistic skills to help redesign cultural narratives—particularly about the female body—in a more positive light, she says.

To learn more about Treuer and her work, visit her website, www.blairtreuer.com. ■

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

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In Memoriam

Robert G. James

Robert G. James, who with his wife, Ardis, founded the International Quilt Museum in Lincoln, Nebraska, died January 21, 2024. He was ninety-eight years old.

Robert, born in Ord, Nebraska, graduated from high school in 1943. He entered the V-5 Navy College Training Program, studying at Doane College in Crete, Nebraska, and the University of Nebraska. He served in the US Navy from 1943-46. After active military duty, he earned a BA degree from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. He then went to Harvard, where in 1948 he completed Harvard Business School as a George F. Baker Scholar, and in 1953 earned a Ph.D. in economics. He taught finance and accounting at Massachusetts Institute of Technology Sloan School.

He served at the Central Intelligence Agency as a branch chief dealing with trade and finance intelligence on the Soviet Bloc and China, before working at Continental Oil in Houston and Mobil Oil Corporation in New York. In 1969, he became president and managing director of Enterprise Development Associates in New York City, a private joint venture involved in shopping center development and management; he retired in 2018.

He also was a member of the Naval Reserves, from which he retired as a Rear Admiral in the Naval Supply Corps in 1981.

Robert loved to play squash, ski, and garden. He and Ardis, who died in 2011, collected quilts from around the world. In 1997, they gave 1,000 quilts to launch the International Quilt Museum. They also helped with the commissioning of the current building and its subsequent expansion.

Robert and Ardis were friends to quilt artists and to SAQA. His commitment to the art form and enthusiasm for its makers will be felt as deeply as he will be missed.

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

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Winter Storm, detail,
by Stephanie Shore

Together, detail,
by Chriss Johns

Workshop Trends

from page 28

That resource lists teachers available for virtual programming and offers listings of public enrollment workshops.

Tims says that for those teachers willing to compile their own videos, he is open to being a platform for them.

A review of websites such as American Quilter's Society and Mancuso Show Management show a host of online learning opportunities. There are many teaching platforms to explore as a teacher and a student that span a global marketplace.

All of these new activities mean that as pandemic behavior patterns continue to loosen and we return to IRL classes, we also know we have a friend in virtual education. ■

Diane Howell is the SAQA Journal editor. She resides in the Phoenix Metro.

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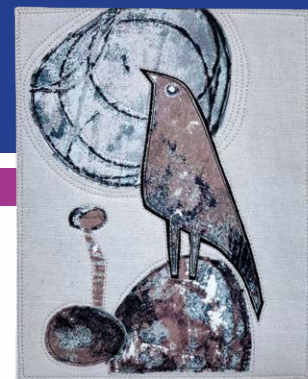
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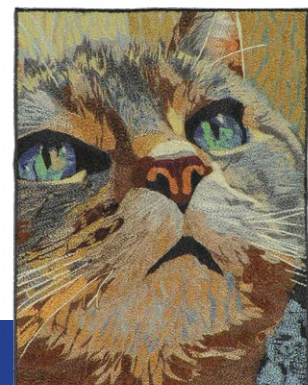
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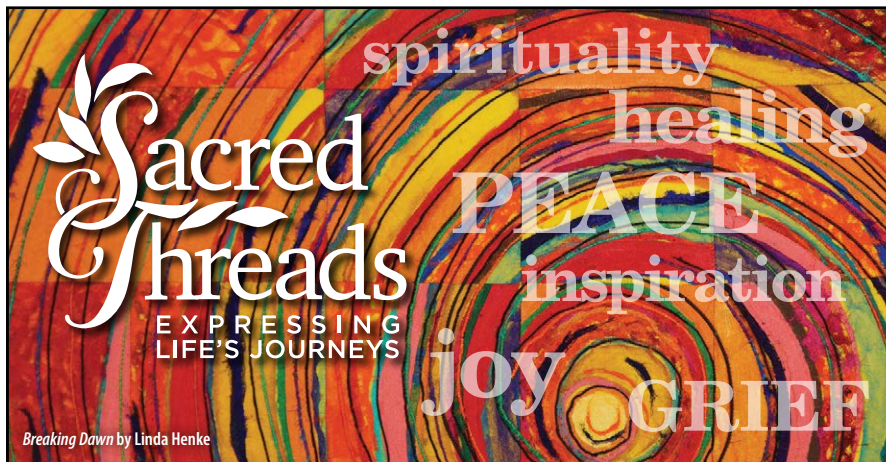
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Breaking Dawn by Linda Henke

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Reflections

from page 32

In *Mimosa's* champagne flute, I incorporated the internal reflections using white and two tints of light blue fabric along the thickest parts of the glass. I also reflected the orange of the mimosa in the upper stem. Then I added a large, solid white external reflection to the outside of the glass. This external reflection crosses over the back rim of the glass and the top of the liquid, giving a clear visual indicator to viewers that it's a reflection on the front of the glass.

One notable change to my champagne flute is that I chose to outline the entire top portion of the glass—the glass surrounding the liquid mimosa—with a thin white outline indicating the edge of the glass. Champagne flutes in real life are made from very thin glass, and when filled with liquid, there is no visual indication of the glass walls.

I tried this in my design before cutting the fabric, but it looked strange. It looked like the glass stopped on the top and bottom of the liquid and the orange was just kind of floating in the space between. So I made the decision to continue the walls of the glass around the liquid—knowing it was a deviation from real-life accuracy—so that my viewers would not get confused.

Creating reflections on water or glass has to start with an understanding of how those reflections are caused and appear in real life. Set up a still life, go to the beach, or analyze photos online. From there, you can adapt the natural phenomenon to your own artistic process. ■

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



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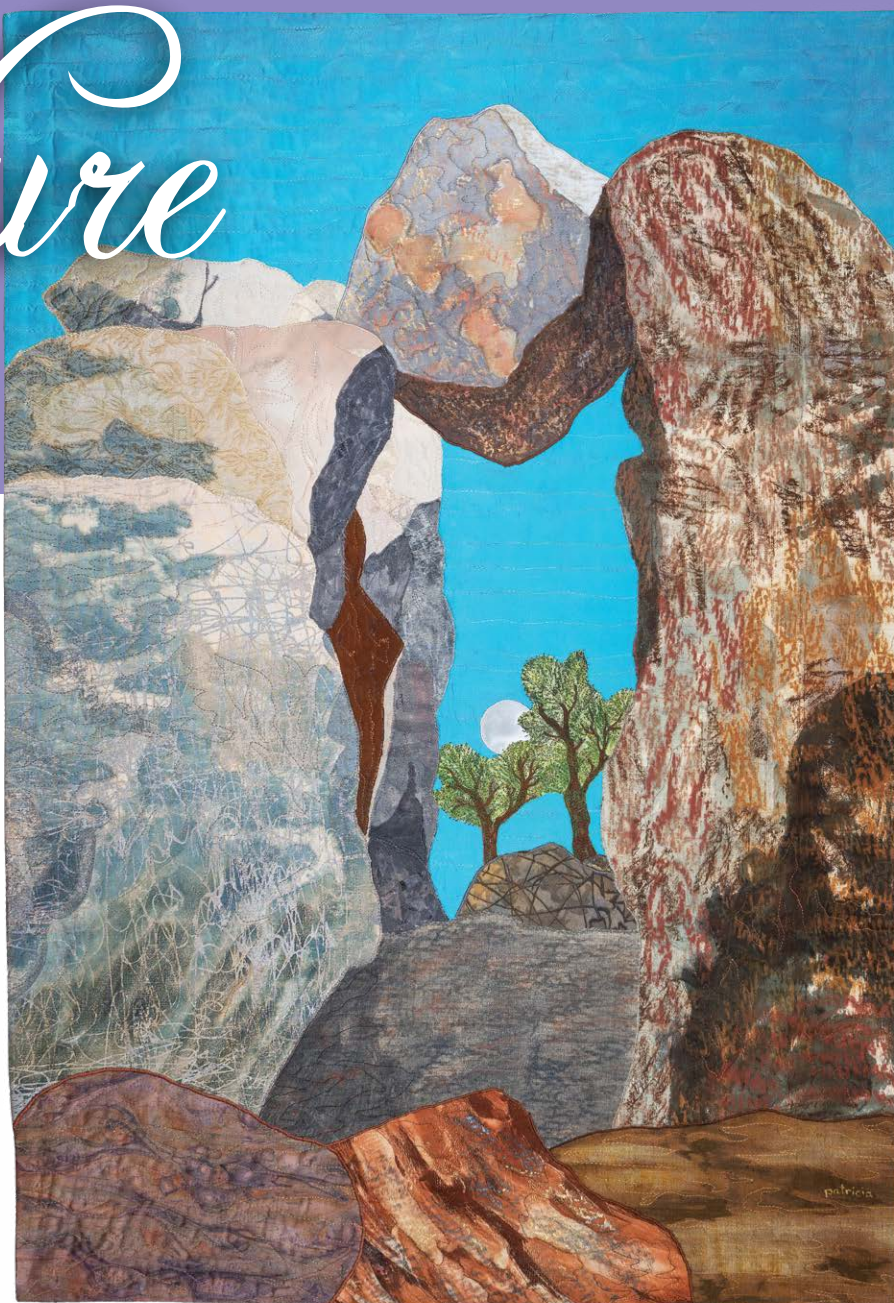
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Nature

by Diane Howell

The first glimpse of *A Question of Balance* invokes thoughts of magic. It is, after all, an art quilt that depicts a rock formation in New Mexico, whose state nickname is Land of Enchantment. Even a straight interstate drive across the state takes in breathtaking colors and sights that are long-remembered, a reality that is the very definition of enchantment. Whether magic was involved in the creation of this particular geological feature—or the art quilt itself—is a question each viewer will have to answer. The end result is a piece by Pat Gould of New Mexico that commands wonder and lingering second looks by gallerygoers.

This art quilt was created after a trip by Gould to New Mexico's City of Rocks State Park, a small but impressive attraction located in the southwestern portion of the state. She first went there in 2006, and it is now her family's favorite state park to visit. Wherever Gould goes, her camera goes with her, and this piece was made based on one of her photos. At City of Rocks, there is no end of fascinating landscapes and close-up details to capture. The park's website offers an apt description of the area: "The park encompasses a one-square-mile area in the scenic Chihuahuan desert region of southwestern New Mexico at an elevation of 5,200 feet. The 'city' is a geologic formation made up of large, sculptured rock columns, or pinnacles, rising as high as forty feet and sepa-



A Question of Balance

35 x 24 inches | 89 x 61 cm | 2012

rated by paths or lanes resembling city streets. These rocks were formed about 34.9 million years ago when a very large volcano erupted. Then, erosion over millions of years slowly formed the sculptured columns seen today, creating a stunning, otherworldly landscape."

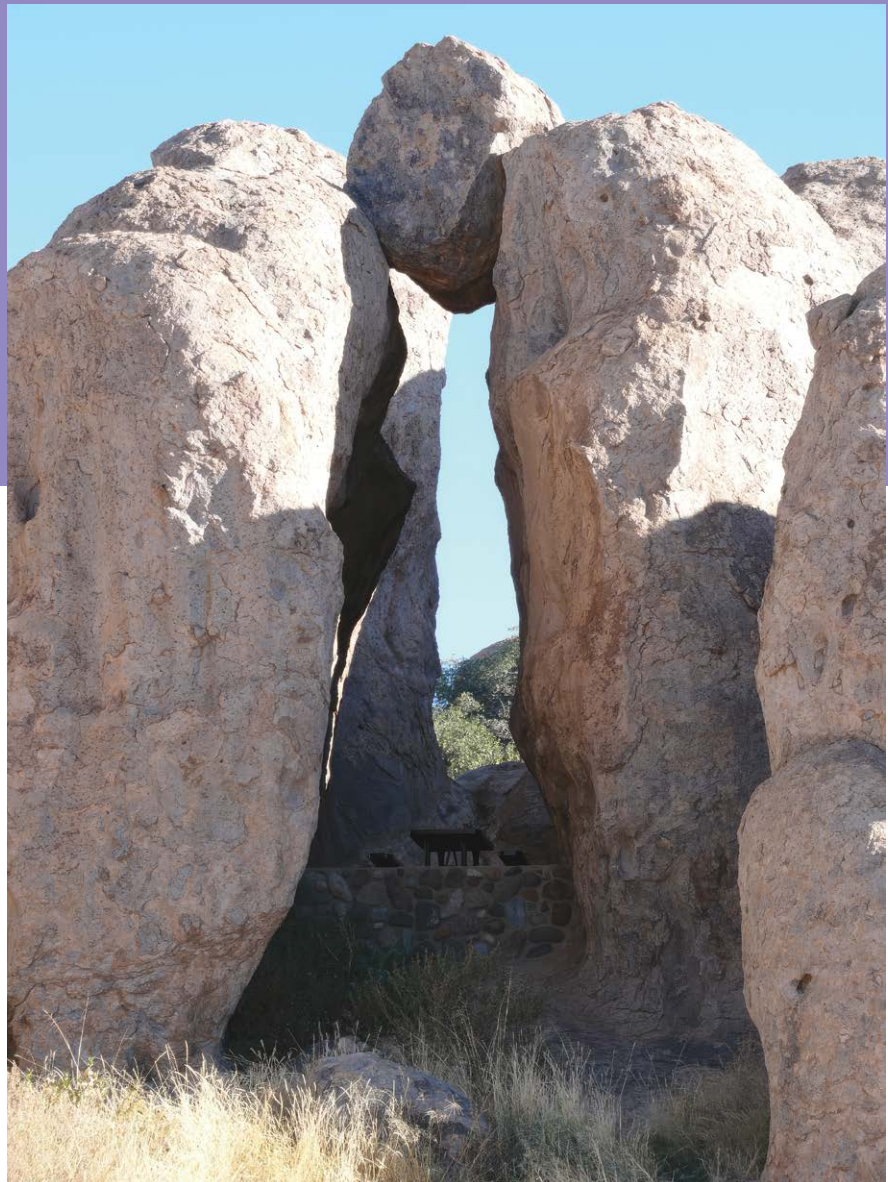
Gould finds the park otherworldly as well as relatable in a totally different way. "We feel like we're living with *The Flintstones*," she says. *The Flintstones* is an American animated cartoon series created in the 1960s. Set in a fanciful

Stone Age universe with adaptations of everything from cars to hair accessories, it remains a cultural touchstone today. The series was recreated with a live-action film in 1994. Because the series is known for comical and wacky scenarios, Gould's description can't help but bring a smile.

A Question of Balance is also part of *Nature's Voice*, a solo exhibition of fiber art, paintings, and photography by Gould at the Open Space Visitor Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

The exhibition runs January 20-March 9, 2024. All of the art on display grows out of the artist's love for travel. Her artist's statement shows how life on the road influences the art she makes: "My inspiration comes from travel in Asia, East Africa, Russia, Antarctica, and extensive travel throughout North America and Europe. I'm drawn to a few subjects in nature that I find perpetually intriguing and my voice is whispering a tribute to the incredible beauty of nature, only touched by the hand of humans on rare occasions. Obsessively drawn to trees, rocks, all forms of water, and animals, I portray these subjects as if they were asking me to reveal their messages to the world. Although my first passion as an artist was photography, I spent over twenty years creating my visions in mixed media fiber art before deciding to concentrate my creative energy on painting and photography. My paintings, photographs, and fiber art are dramatic portraits of Earth and I hope to draw the viewers into these scenes to share the exhilaration I feel and to cherish the wonders of the place we call home."

The subject of this art quilt could be construed as finding balance in one's own life, a defiant stand amidst modern conflict. But Gould sees its natural splendor. "This piece wasn't so much about balance in my life as just highlighting how amazing our planet



Pat Gould's art quilt, A Question of Balance, is based on this formation in New Mexico's City of Rocks State Park, located in the southwestern portion of the state.

can be if we just stop to take it in. I was raised in a family that cherished the natural world and we spent our vacations exploring the beauty of nature even when we weren't old enough to talk or walk. That gave me purpose in life and it is my compass."

The piece also captures the feel of New Mexico through its attentive color palette, achieved with techniques used by detail-oriented fiber artists. "I painted the silk background blue and then discharged brown silk for two of the large brown rocks. I also used Shiva Paintstiks with stamps underneath the silk fabric on some of the rocks to cre-

ate the texture. The light rocks and the purple-toned rock on the left are silks that were purchased already hand dyed by someone else."

This approach is in keeping with Gould's typical approach to color selection. "I prefer to use a natural palette and have only rarely depicted my nature scenes as abstract with bold colors that aren't natural to the subject."

Gould continues to travel, photograph sights, and make art from her home studio in Albuquerque, New Mexico. ■

Diane Howell is the SAQA Journal editor. She resides in the Phoenix Metro.

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