

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS

SAQA JOURNAL

STUDIO ART QUILT ASSOCIATES

2019 | Volume 29, No. 4



INSIDE: MIKIKO TAKASE • DESIGN ON A LONGARM • INSTAGRAM INSIGHT • ART CLOTH NETWORK AT 20 • WISE WORDS • IAN BERRY • INSPIRED • ART TALK • CONNECTING OUR NATURAL WORLDS • JAM SHOWCASE • MEMBER GALLERY



BARALLA

MIDNIGHT GOLD

The origins of Spanish tiles go back thousands of years...

Beautiful pieces of artisan tiles were made for churches and palaces throughout Spain, taking Spanish culture and decor to another level. It later developed and spread throughout Spanish homes to floors, kitchens, bathrooms and most of all, indoor patios.

Inspired by this traditional art form, Banyan Batiks' new Baralla collection captures this rich Spanish history by using a hand done screen effect to achieve an iridescent quality. It features a main print with three different designs, truly unique to this collection.

Visit BanyanBatiks.com to download the **free pattern** and see all seven gorgeous colorways.

Baralla Bed Runner 78" x 30"
By Banyan Batiks Studio



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Linden Lancaster
Bush Stone-Curlew 40 x 30 inches | 2018
 Photo by Cameron Lancaster

QUICK NOTES

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

Studio Art Quilt Associates, Inc. (SAQA) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote the art quilt. We provide education, exhibitions, professional development, documentation, and publications.

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

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SAQA pushes boundaries to advance exhibitions



I represented SAQA at the Festival of Quilts in Birmingham, England. Our SAQA Global Exhibition *Dusk to Dawn* was there, and I was pleased at the response it received. Although an extremely large venue, many people made a point to come to our exhibition first and were so happy that we were there. It made me think how far we have come in our 30-year history.

When I started on the board more than six years ago, we aspired to place our exhibitions in museums. A few of our members had achieved this goal, but SAQA exhibitions seldom had. When *Stories of Migration* appeared in 2016 at The Textile Museum in Washington, D.C., it marked a turning point for the organization. We decided to be a vendor at the annual

In 2020, we will exhibit *Masterworks: Abstract & Geometric* at the Max Berk Textilkunst Museum—Palatinate Museum in Heidelberg, Germany. This is our first non-U.S. museum booking, and I don't think it will be the last.

SAQA is always looking for ways to push the boundaries to promote our work. We continue to consider ideas that once would have seemed completely out of the norm as we promote the art quilt.

We conquer new realms with artwork as we push our own boundaries to develop and grow as artists. This is one benefit of belonging to an organization such as SAQA. We have a commitment to ourselves to become better artists. While not all of us think our work is good enough to be in a museum, it doesn't stop us from aspiring to reach that goal. SAQA gives all of us support, interactions, and opportunities. What we choose to do with this network is up to us.

Regards,

Lisa Walton

“Our vision statement now reflects where we want to be: The art quilt is universally respected as a fine art medium.”

The board of directors recently approved our new strategic plan which was the result of hard work by a committee that was responsible for distilling SAQA's purpose. The mission statement is clear—SAQA promotes the art quilt. Our vision statement now reflects where we want to be: The art quilt is universally respected as a fine art medium. I think that we are well-positioned to achieve this goal.

American Alliance of Museums conference to offer our traveling exhibitions. This industry show is now a continuing commitment. We produce a marketing catalog for potential venues that showcases the work of our artists and quality of our exhibitions. Today, museums approach us to book exhibitions—15 new museum contracts were signed in 2019!



The Neighborhood (detail), Geri Patterson-Kutras
PHOTO CREDIT: Gregory Case

Imagine a *new* SAQA Shipping Center

**This year, SAQA shipped 664 quilts to 32 venues in 10 countries—
all from a 12 x 12-foot space in Ohio.**

In this small space, up to 300 quilts at a time are carefully stored and labeled on tables. Bill Reker, Director of SAQA Global Exhibitions, packs exhibitions into large wheeled trunks that weigh up to 220 pounds. Bill also stores and ships exhibition catalogs, back issues of the *SAQA Journal* and *Art Quilt Quarterly*, hanging rods, banners, SAQA store items, 450 trunk show quilts, and 443 Benefit Auction quilts.

Our shipping center is bursting at the seams. We need a larger, more efficient space.

**Help us grow SAQA's exhibitions!
Please make a gift in support of our new shipping center today.**

www.saqa.com/donate

Life moves fast

by Diane Howell

With so much zooming by us every day, that's all the more reason to be clear when you communicate. Everything from an email newsletter to an artist statement calls for clear messaging and precise language. How do you make sure you reach peers and collectors with the message you want them to have?

One way to communicate in today's digital age is on Instagram. In this issue, writer Cheryl Sleboda looks at the latest tricks you can perform to make this platform your own. It is all about the pictures, but if you create a focused theme for your posts, you will enrich viewer experience and reinforce your voice. To build a strategy to make your brand stand out in the platform's algorithm, start by reading her article on page 18.

If, like Sleboda, you decide to make Instagram text posts a regular part of your outreach, you might want help putting your thoughts into words.

Words can be tricky. A phrase can be slippery. But you can avoid confusion. Enjoy Quinn McDonald's essay on word choice and misadventure on page 29. It will help make your next writing project zing with accuracy. All it takes is a few well-chosen words.

A new SAQA Special Interest Group (SIG) helps give new meaning to life with a longarm. Art Quilt Design on Longarm and Midarm Machines brings together artists who are doing amazing things on these machines, from design to binding. Longarms aren't just for quilting anymore! When the group starts up again in 2020, anyone is welcome to join it and its companion Facebook page. Members are quickly learning from each other and pushing boundaries. See how they are doing this on page 30, and consider joining this exciting new SIG. Learn more at saqa.com/groups.



Finally, art quilts continue to resonate with audiences around the world. Enjoy this issue's galleries and articles, brimming with artwork. Featured artist Mikiko Takase shares her journey from traditional quilter to quilt artist. Ian Berry from the United Kingdom creates moving portraits and scenes using only denim. Mary Ruth Smith, the subject of this issue's *Inspired* column, explains how stories and news photos bring her work to life.

There is purpose in the telling of tales in cloth. Ask yourself what story you want to tell and make it clear. ■

Sara Sharp *Milkweed and Hummingbirds*

33 x 49 inches | 2013

Follow these busy little birds to page 8, where you will find this issue's installment of Member Gallery, Action!



In Memoriam

We are sad to report that two beloved quilt artists have passed away, Elizabeth "Liz" Jean Axford and Margot Strand Jensen.

Liz Axford was born in Canada in April 1953 and passed away in July at her home on Whidbey Island, Washington.

Her artistic inclinations led her to pursue architecture for 15 years, before turning to her true passion: creating textile art, especially art quilts. Her last exhibition was *Overlay*, a solo show at the International Quilt Museum at the University of Nebraska

see "In Memoriam" on page 34

A photograph of Sarah Ann Smith, a woman with short grey hair and glasses, smiling and holding a small pug dog. She is in a cluttered studio filled with books, art supplies, and a sewing machine. The text 'VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT' is overlaid on the top left of the image.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Sarah Ann Smith

Sarah Ann Smith and Pigwidgeon enjoy time in their studio in Hope, Maine.

Q: What volunteer roles do you serve in for SAQA?

A: Since 2015, I have been a member of the Exhibition Committee (EC). As such, I am currently chairman of the DevCom, properly titled the Development Subcommittee. My previous committee role as exhibition coordinator manager morphed into my current responsibility. I also work with our new Special Interest Group, Art Quilt Design on Longarm and Midarm Machines, and the Online Exhibitions Study Group.

Q: How do these roles enrich your SAQA membership?

A: Going to the EC and DevCom meetings is just plain FUN. Can you imagine looking forward to meetings? We meet monthly online via Zoom so that we can see each other in real time. We have members from three continents on a regular basis, and some of SAQA's finest artists, creative minds, and dedicated staff are on the EC.

As SAQA's core staff has grown, SAQA has been able to centralize its work, thereby shifting the roles for the Exhibition Committee and its volunteers. We no longer have a volunteer sending accept/deny letters from a personal computer. Today, all information is kept in a centralized database where the staff can easily access it. It has been wonderful to see that evolution from behind the scenes and be part of the group that is leading SAQA into the future.

Q: How does volunteering reinforce your art practice?

A: The example of past and present EC members, who inspire me, helps me give back to the organization, and be more productive and careful with my time. I need to make sure that I make time for art rather than fit it in around everything else.

I also learn a ton from the artists in the EC who are more experienced than I am about exhibiting and the art world. Learning about how much happens behind the scenes in SAQA makes me appreciate how many volunteer hours are donated by members around the world to make SAQA the robust organization that it is.

Q: Tell us about your time with SAQA.

A: I joined SAQA in March 2006. My sons were still in grade school, so the next eight years were busy with endless Mom things and sporting events. As the boys became independent, I was able to make more work, respond to more SAQA calls for entry (the vast majority of which I am not juried into—I view my entry fees as regular donations to support SAQA's mission to promote the art quilt), develop my nationwide teaching and exhibiting career, and begin selling my art.

Browsing SAQA artist galleries and online images of the exhibitions is always inspiring. As always, seeing the exhibitions in person—usually when I'm teaching at International Quilt Festival/Houston—is so much better than even the best photography. I also find

the SAQA Yahoo and Facebook groups incredibly useful.

Travel in New England is challenging—all roads lead to Boston, which is great if that is where you are headed. If you want to go elsewhere, say west from Maine to New Hampshire or Vermont, there are a lot of twisty, two-lane roads. That makes regional group meetings difficult to reach. We still have a small but interested Local Connection. I enjoy meeting with them and our counterparts in the Massachusetts and Rhode Island region when I can.

Last but not least, *Art Quilt Quarterly* is the magazine I had hoped to find for nearly two decades, since I began making art quilts. I love it—if you don't subscribe, DO! I love the wide-ranging and in-depth articles. Combined with the *SAQA Journal*, I have regular opportunities to learn about others in our medium.

Q: Are you a SAQA JAM?

A: In 2007 a dear friend and fellow SAQA member sent me *Portfolio 14* as a Christmas gift. As soon as I saw it, I knew I wanted to be a part of it. I applied in early 2008 and was accepted as what was then called a Professional Artist Member, now Juried Artist Member. I appreciate the exposure from being in *Portfolio*, now published in *Art Quilt Quarterly*. I feel my JAM dues help support an organization that does so much for art quilts. ■

Action!



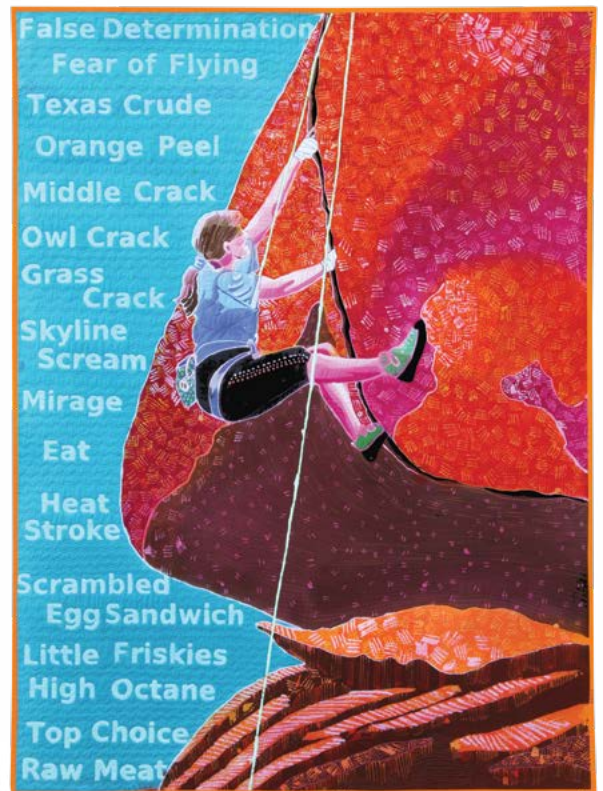
Sharon Casey
Cosmic Shift
39 x 36 inches | 2018
Photo by Michael Thorpe



Sara Sharp
Milkweed and Hummingbirds
33 x 49 inches | 2013



Diane Melms
Life Dance
42 x 27 inches | 2017



Kathy York
A Few of My Favorite Things
47 x 35 inches | 2009



Teresita Leal

In the Spotlight

8 x 8 inches | 2017

Photo by Daniel Chen

Frauke Palmer

The Watchers

45 x 45 inches | 2017



Jean Wells Keenan

Pacific Gyre

59 x 23 inches | 2019

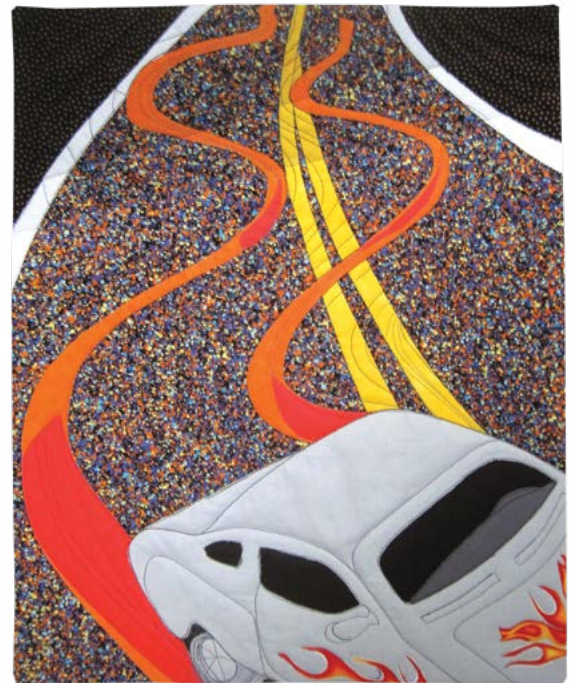
Photo by Gary Alvis



Lea McComas

Running Commentary

51 x 21 inches | 2013



Joanna Mack

Flaming Out

19.5 x 16 inches | 2016

Mikiko Takase

Art quilts spring from spirited inspiration

by Cindy Grisdela



Japanese artist Mikiko Takase discovered art quilts in 2011, having spent nearly 30 years making traditional quilts.

Traditional quilting in Japan generally means concentration on great accuracy and attention to detail, elements that make wonderful quilts, she says. Following this convention, she used to plan each of her quilts completely before doing any sewing. But her studies with Jim Hay, the SAQA rep in Japan, helped her understand the importance of inspiration. "Now, when I make quilts, I let inspiration guide me during the process, discovering and expressing my image as I go."

Inspiration for *Jim Hay's Art Class School Trip*, made in 2017, grew out of her visit to Hay's hometown of Battle Creek, Michigan, as well as several other cities in the United States. This piece has a playful, folk art feel to it. Another quilt influenced by the same trip has a more traditional feel, with



Jim Hay's Art Class School Trip
77 x 57 inches | 2017



Christmas Tree Hunting

77 x 71 inches | 2017



Ice Castle

2016

a red-and-white color scheme and star-block composition. *Christmas Tree Hunting*, also from 2017, was inspired by the white Christmases Takase imagines occur in Michigan.

Textile appreciation

Takase finds inspiration in many places. She collects ideas from newspapers, photos, and posters; she visits museums to look at works of art. For example, *Ice Castle*, created in 2016, pays homage to the paper-cut art of author Hans Christian Andersen.

There were no quilters in Takase's family as she grew up. She was born in Shizuoka prefecture in Japan, near Mt. Fuji. "In ancient Japan, people didn't make these kinds of patchworks." Nonetheless, her family had a close association with cloth. Her grandmother made yarn from silk cocoons, then dyed the yarn, wove it into cloth, and sewed the cloth into

kimonos. Her mother made traditional Japanese dolls.

Takase now lives in Gunma prefecture, about an hour north of Tokyo via the bullet train. She began studying quilting in 1982 at a patchwork school run by Chuck Nohara and her husband, who are known as pioneers in Japanese quiltmaking, Takase says.

Takase is drawn to fabric. "I love fabrics. I'm happy just seeing it."

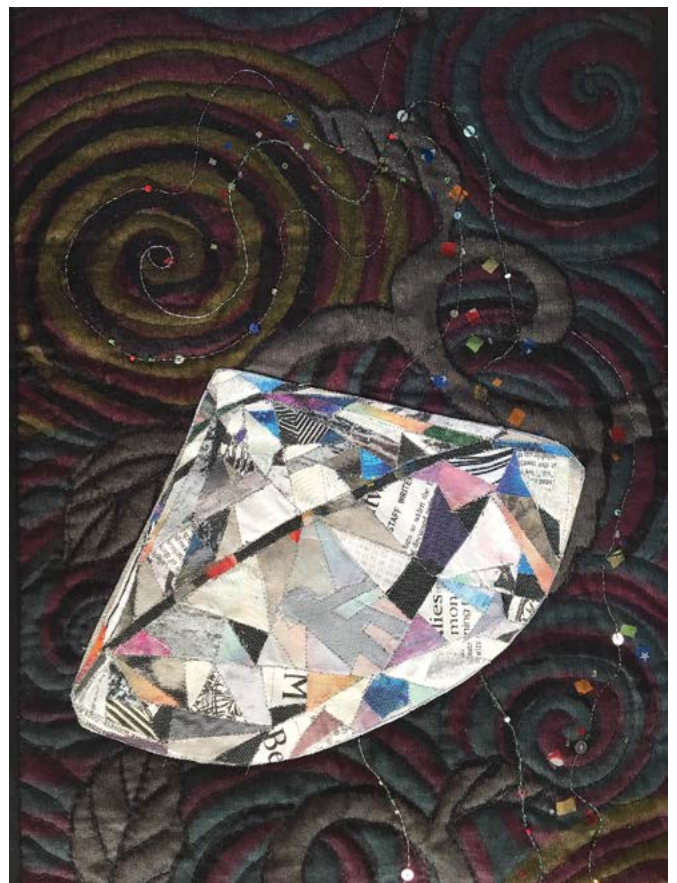
She enjoys cutting cloth into smaller pieces to make her own art. She creates her art quilts using both hand and machine techniques, including piecing, appliqué, dyeing, and stenciling. Sometimes she adds beads, lace, or ribbon.



Traditional Japanese dolls reside in Mikiko Takase's studio.



Swim in the Wind
19 x 13 inches | 2015



Time Machine
20 x 14 inches | 2019



The Shape of Water
30 x 20 inches | 2018

Swim in the Wind, from 2015, is a colorful exploration of some of the freedoms Japanese women have achieved. “In the old days, women wore tight, heavy kimonos and usually stayed inside their homes in their small world. Now they move more actively in a wider world to become who they are. They are free to swim in the wind.”

Takase’s studio is in her family living room. “So while I’m quilting, I’m also able to cook and watch TV.” Her sewing machine is set up on a table, and she has a display of traditional Japanese dolls nearby.

In 2017, Takase was asked to join an international group of art quilters called Cloth in Common. Although hesitant at first, she agreed to take part with encouragement from Hay. The group, which includes SAQA members in the United States, Europe, and Australia, issues a prompt every two months as the design theme for an art quilt. Examples of

recent prompts are water, touch, spring, sound, and kitchen.

Lonely Avenue (not pictured) was created in response to one of last year’s Cloth in Common prompts, road. It was inspired by the lyrics to a Ray Charles song of the same name about lost love. Takase used a gray color palette; houses are closely tilted together and a figure dressed in black is in the lower left corner to paint a picture of sadness.

She enjoys the artistic challenge of the prompts. “My mind must work within the same constraints as the other members of our group to create [a piece], and this shared challenge is inspiring and empowering.” Hopefully, participation in the group will help her quilts continue to evolve as art quilts, she adds.

Her art quilts do continue to delight. *The Shape of Water*, 2018, includes a group of ethereal looking jellyfish floating on a graduated blue background stitched with wavy lines

and bubbles. The jellies are different sizes, making them appear to recede into the distance. Jellyfish aquariums are popular in Japan; seeing the jellies float through the water is relaxing, Takase says.

Time Machine, 2019, features a glittering object that looks like it is made of cut glass, or perhaps diamonds, floating on a dark background stitched with wavy lines. Made in response to yet another prompt, time, the piece references one of Takase's favorite movies. She has used improvisational piecing to create the shapes and lines of the sci-fi object to great effect, contrasting the light areas of the machine with the dark of the background space.

Being in this international group is different for Takase in other ways as well. "Japanese groups tend to be like small 'kingdoms,' centering on one leader," whereas the Cloth in Common members treat each other as equals, she explains. Through the internet, the group is able to unite members from different parts of the world. "Sometimes it feels like a dream that I am part of such a creative process that is both challenging and inspiring."

Takase is interested in studying work by quilt artists in other countries to incorporate more freedom to her own work. "I want to mix my traditional Japanese quilting style with the more modern Western styles. I would be very happy to create a kind of hybrid quilting."

Learn more about Takase's work at the Cloth in Common blog, clothin-common.com/blog, and on Instagram, where her handle is [@mickytakase](https://www.instagram.com/mickytakase). ■

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



Fairy Circle
89 x 89 inches | 2010



Light Pizza House
38 x 31 inches | 2014

Selections from *Connecting Our Natural Worlds*

This exhibition showcases works about the natural wonder of habitats around the globe and how we can become better stewards of them. The artists identified endangered flora and fauna in their own backyards and recommended a call to action to save the species.

Connecting Our Natural Worlds premiered at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, near Tucson, Arizona, where it continues through Jan. 5, 2020. The museum provided interpretive context for the exhibition.

The juror was Holly Swangstu, former director and curator of the Art Institute and Ironwood Gallery at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum. The museum strives to inspire people to live in harmony with the natural world by fostering love, appreciation, and understanding of the Sonoran Desert.

The exhibition benefactor is Shirley Neary and its art patrons are Nancy Erickson, Ann Johnston, Frank Klein, and Bobbe Shapiro Nolan.

For more information about this exhibition, visit saqa.com/naturalworlds.



Nancy Costea

Texas Wild Rice

34 x 43 inches | 2019



Elisabeth J. Vereycken

Connecting Our Natural Worlds

37 x 24 inches | 2019



Amanda Miller

Regeneration (Diptych)

41 x 44 inches | 2018

Photo by Jon Christopher Meyer



Linden Lancaster

Bush Stone-Curlew

40 x 30 inches | 2018

Photo by Cameron Lancaster



Brenda H. Smith

Soon the Summer Sun

41 x 29 inches | 2013



Aileyn Renli Ecob

Spring

35 x 58 inches | 2018

Photo by Kerby Smith

Deborah Boschert

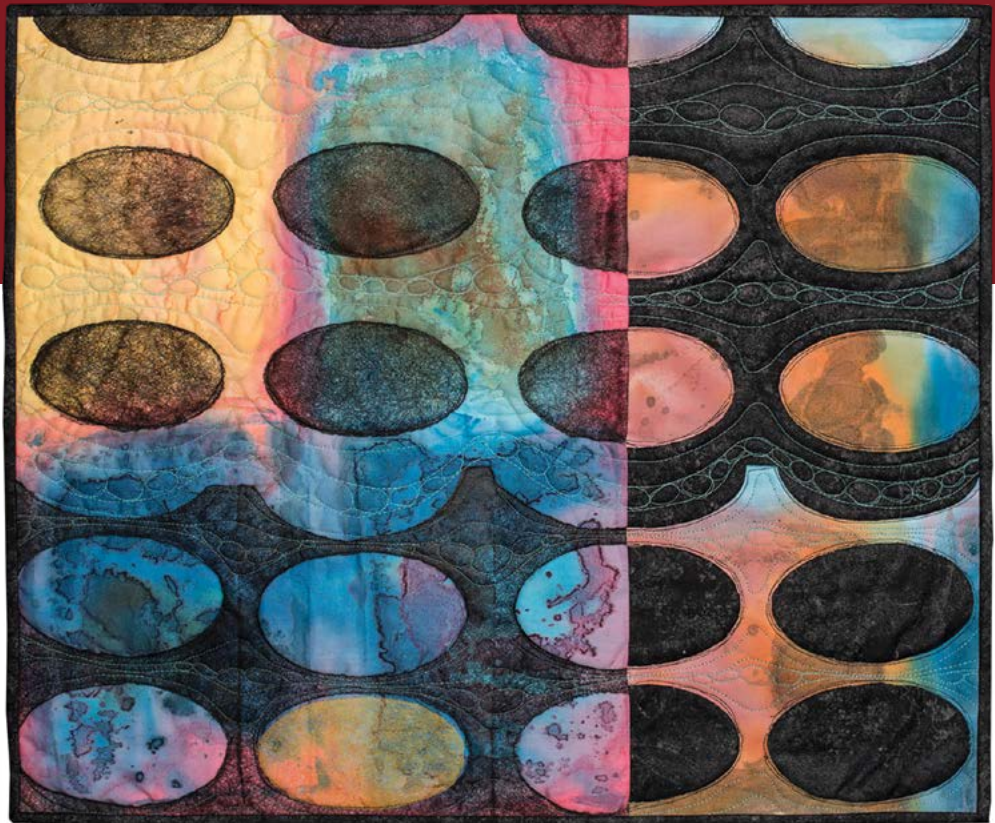
Treelines

31 x 80 inches | 2019



Art Cloth Network turns 20

by Deborah Weir



Regina Marzlin
Ascending
20 x 24 inches | 2017

Art Cloth Network (ACN) celebrates its twentieth birthday in 2020 with activities that include *Full Circle*, a juried exhibition March 23 through June 22 at Textile Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the city where ACN was born.

Art Cloth Network (ACN) was founded in 2000 by Jane Dunnewold and students in her master class: Complex Cloth. Art cloth is defined as “material transformed by adding or subtracting color, line, shape, texture, or fiber to make a compelling surface and composition.” Dunnewold first introduced the concept of layering many varied techniques on one length of cloth to create intricate fabrics that stood as art on their own, neither

framed nor quilted. Initially, Dunnewold defined art cloth as “lengths of white/plain cloth enhanced with layers of surface design processes.” Instead of dyeing or printing, she was dyeing and printing as well as foiling, collaging, stitching, and more to create layers of patterning.

Over time, with the experimentation of many sophisticated practitioners and innovative artists, art cloth has expanded to include 3D work, digital techniques, installation pieces, and artwork that can withstand placement outdoors. ACN is at the forefront of this evolution. Much of the work created by ACN members represents the artists’ beliefs and responses to the world around them. The

medium may not be the message, but simply a refined vehicle for expressing it.

The organization issues an annual call for a juried exhibition. *Full Circle’s* premiere

“Art cloth has expanded to include 3D work, digital techniques, installation pieces, and artwork that can withstand placement outdoors.”



Sherri Lipman McCauley
Layers of the Truth
56 x 26.5 inches | 2016



Merrill Comeau
The Sins of the Mother Rest Heavily
52 x 60 inches | 2014
Photo by Will Howcroft Photography

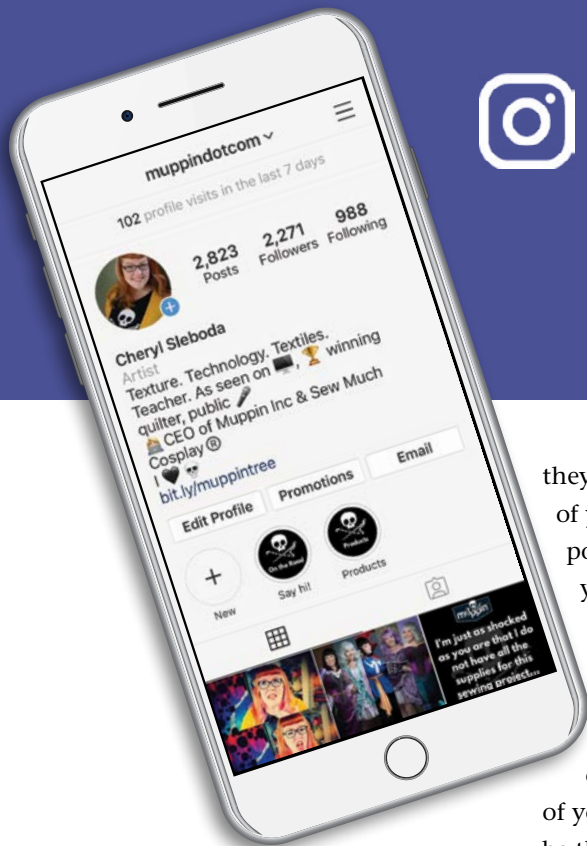
installation at Textile Center aptly coincides with ACN's milestone 2020 meeting, also in Minneapolis.

Russ Little, current ACN president, was in the first class of juried members in 2008. The desire for connection with like-minded artists inspired him to apply. He brought digital printing to the fore as a new technique applicable to the ever-growing list of creative processes available to textile artists. Little comments that the self-assurance of members can be attributed to their willingness to take risks and push their chosen medium so that their voices are heard.

ACN exhibitions are found in museums, galleries, and major airports throughout North America up to three times per year. Members locate appropriate venues and standing committees arrange details and publicity. Even though members are juried into ACN, their work must be juried into each annual exhibition cycle. The group hires world-renowned textile practitioners for this task. Michael James, Els van Baarle, and Bruce Hoffman are among former jurors. A catalog is produced for each exhibition, with images and information available online.

ACN remains relevant today because of its receptivity to change. The organization is on the cutting

see "Art Cloth" on page 32



Take your Instagram game to the next level!

by Cheryl Sleboda

As a fiber artist, you probably love Instagram. It is a high dose of visual goodness in one stream. But if you are an artist who uses this platform for business, Instagram becomes more of a challenge.

Here are some tips and tricks to excite your customers and let you see real engagement on this vital platform.

Beyond basics

You have your Instagram account, and you take pictures and post them. You are working on taking better and more interesting pictures for your feed. You have probably heard people talk about “the algorithm” and how it’s potentially suppressing your content to your followers. The one surefire, free way to run the algorithm blockade is to post consistently, preferably every day.

Your posts should also be on topic for your brand. It’s tempting to share your cat, dog, or kids, but your business needs you to “give them what

they came for,” and that is pictures of your fiber art. Did you know that posts with low engagement cause your next posts to be pushed to fewer followers? That’s part of the algorithm. Take notice of which posts your followers engage with the most, and make more of those! More than likely, images of your process or finished work will be the most popular, not a family birthday party.

Curate your feed

Review your profile to determine how it looks to the average outsider. Does it give a sense of who you are or what your business is about? What kind of artist you are?

I took stock of my own feed about a year ago. After watching an online video on how to customize your Instagram feed, I noticed that certain companies kept a similar look in all of their posts. When I went to their profile, I saw how curated their content was. An account I follow on refinishing furniture has a very “shabby chic” pink, turquoise, and white feel to every photo. Their brand was unmistakable on their profile.

In contrast, my photos were all over the place in regards to color and theme. They didn’t tell my brand’s story the way I wanted it told. Since my brand color is black and my logo includes skulls, I started editing my photos with heavy filters to darken them. My memes and other graphic

text posts now have black backgrounds. Every sixth picture is a text post, which I create using the same font and branding, thereby maintaining a uniform look. Today, I’m much happier with how my brand is represented to new or returning followers who click through to my profile.

Business accounts

If you decide that you must share your family photos, open a second account for that purpose. Then convert your art account to a business one. To establish a business account, open your profile and click on the three lines at the top. Choose “Settings” at the bottom of this menu, and then “Account.” At the bottom, it will say to “Switch to a Professional Account.” From there, select the type of account you are (“Creator” or “Business”).

Once this account is activated, you have access to Insights, metrics provided by Instagram that show how your account performs. This feature details how many people click on your profile or website link plus much more. You will see customer demographics such as age, gender, etc. This kind of data can be overwhelming, but as I explained earlier, consistent content is what will improve your numbers. Try to not get too bogged down in details until you are ready to tweak your posts to test their maximum effectiveness with different market segments.

Stories for you

Stories, the circles at the top of your Instagram page, is a feature that is here to stay. In fact, experts say that eventually most social media content will be more like Stories and less like static posts that live forever on your page. If you are not using the Stories option, start right away. Many people use Stories for Behind The Scenes (shortened to BTS on Instagram), day-to-day, or insider looks into your business or artistic process. Here you can sneak in family or animal pictures. An image of your cat curled up on fabric is still on brand, but is also a nice slice-of-life post that may no longer be appropriate in your main feed. Since changing to my dark, curated feed, this is where my brighter, happier pictures reside. People can still appreciate my personality and the goofy things in my crazy life.

Maximize Your Profile

Instagram is notorious for having only one place for customers to click through to your website, and that is through your profile. This causes a lot of “Click my link in my bio” captions, so maximize the impression people have when they go to your profile. Ensure your profile is click worthy with a few tricks.

First of all, let’s tackle the link. There are lots of tools to take a customer to a “link tree” where they can select options such as your shop, blog, or about me page on your website. Linktree is one of those services. You also can make a landing page on your own website. Both of my business pages link out to one of these trees, allowing customers to explore my many options without returning

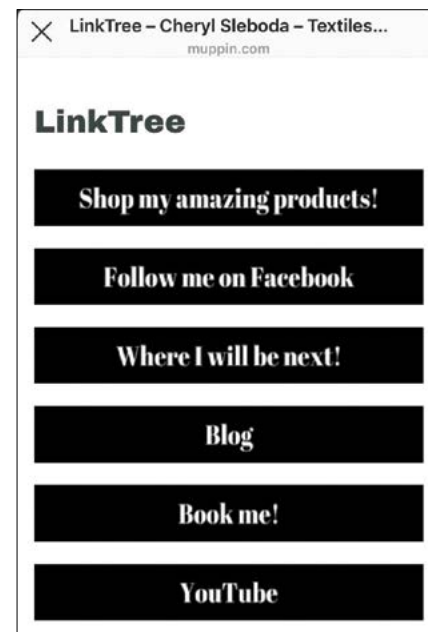


to Instagram to access each one. I can say “go to my blog, link in bio,” and know they can get there.

Next up, let’s look at your bio. You only have 150 characters to tell your customers what’s what; only the first four lines are visible before customers reach the “More” option. Try to get the essence of your brand in those top four lines. Clever use of emojis cuts down on long words and shows customers your playful side. Lastly, your Stories can be selected to archive and organized into categories on your profile. With a little planning, you can create graphics to act as header cards, further separating your Stories into topics people will click through. If you teach, you can list where you will be. If you have products or art for sale, you can highlight them. You can also archive specific BTS posts of your process for a particular work. Use a graphic to collect this info to make your brand stand out.

Marketing with Instagram

Social media marketing is something you can do yourself with a little practice and know-how. Social media

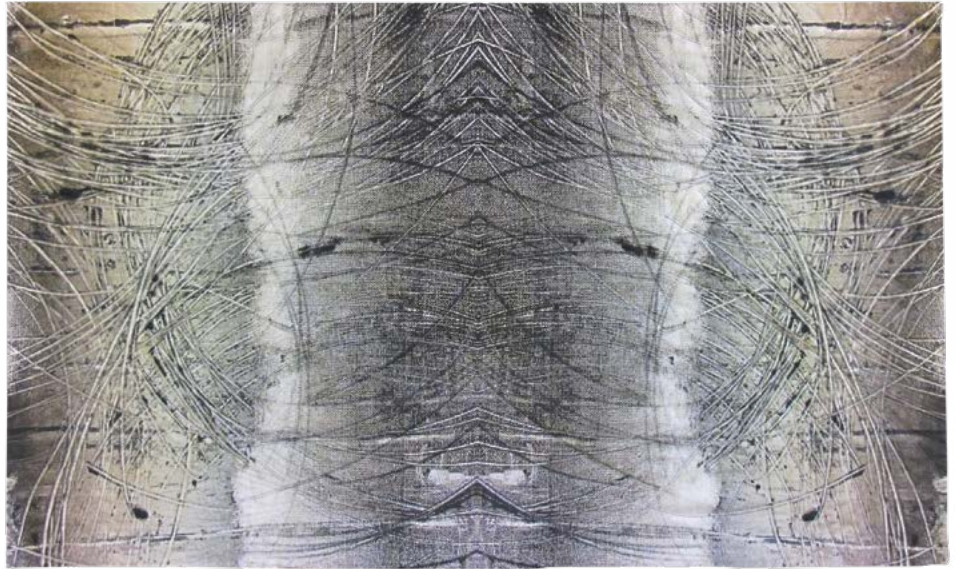


is just that, social. Increase your reach by inviting people to comment on a question you pose. Commenting is currently the greatest factor at play in the Instagram algorithm; posts with lots of comments get pushed to the top. That is why it’s good to ask your followers questions, such as, “Would you want to see more of this process?” or “Which color do you like better?” When someone can easily comment, you have the opportunity to answer back, furthering the discussion, and creating a connection with your fans. And remember, it is an Instagram best practice to always comment back to people who comment to you. Also, be sure to answer your messages in the upper corner as quickly as you can.

Hashtags are often vilified and feel a bit ugly, but they are still one of the top ways to have your post arrive in the overall conversation and search function on Instagram. As quilters, hashtags like #quilt or #quilter have millions of items to sort through. Use a hashtag that’s more unique and crosses over into other areas to

see “Instagram Game” on page 36

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



Barbara Schneider

Line Play, var. 1

32.5 x 52 inches | 2017



Judith Tomlinson Trager

Rift—Dakota Formation

32 x 59 inches | 2017





Teresa Shippy

*1960 Convertible Cadillac with a
1961 Shasta Airflyte Trailer*

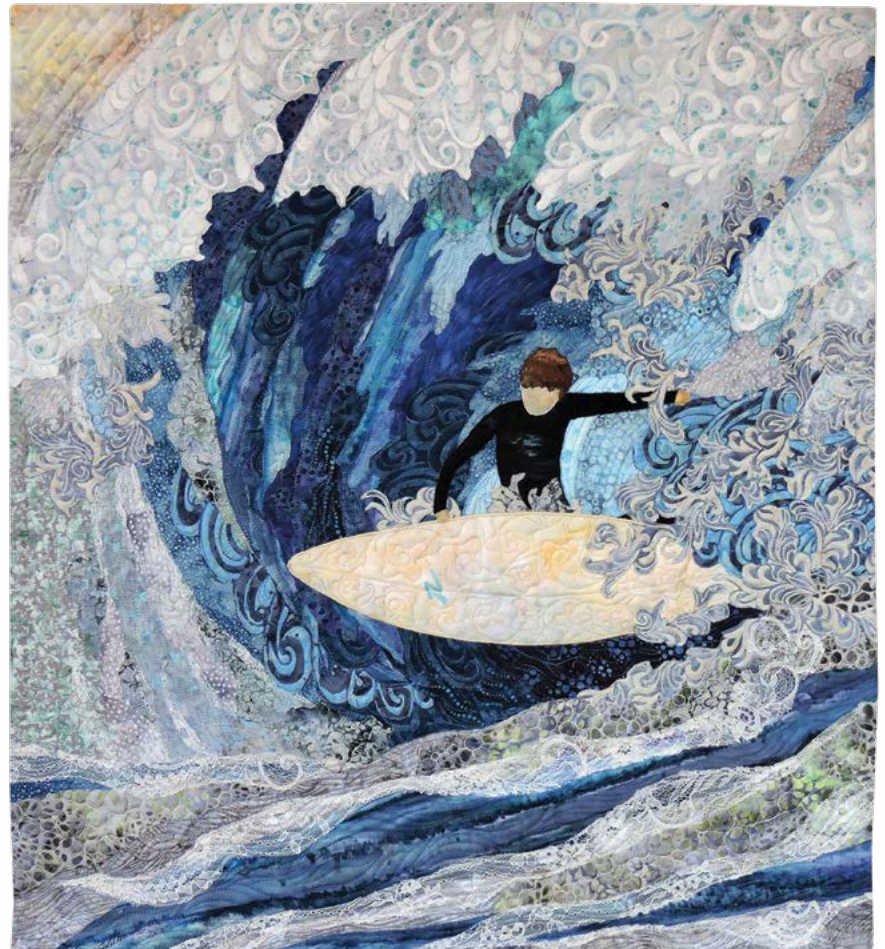
19.5 x 42 inches | 2017



Sandra Bruce

Dame Lorraine

79 x 49 inches | 2018



Eileen J. Williams

The Wild Surf

31 x 28 inches | 2018

Ian Berry:

Works in denim reflect contemporary times

by ZJ Humbach



What is more universal than denim? From clothing to bedding, from upholstered furniture to insulation in homes, we love denim. It's versatile, durable, and comfortable. Ian Berry takes denim to another level, creating art that speaks to everyone.

"It started when I noticed my old pile of jeans in my childhood home. I was moving to London and didn't want to throw them out," explains Berry. "I'd done a collage of Gordon Brown and Tony Blair out of newspaper and thought I could apply the same principle, but in denim." What started as a simple observation became so much more.

Today, Berry is a member of two elite global clubs. In 2013, *Art Business News* recognized him in an article entitled *30 Under Thirty: Young Artists Revolutionizing the World of Fine Arts*. *Sourcing Journal* named him to

Ian Berry works on Ideal Home, a piece in his Behind Closed Doors series, at his studio in 2016.

Photo by Debbie Bragg



***And Still the Voices are
Calling from Far Away***

47 x 47 inches | 2019
Photo by Debbie Bragg

its latest *Rivet 50*, an index of the top 50 influencers in the world for the denim industry.

When Berry first began working with denim, he was studying to become an advertising art director. “As I began cutting up my blue jeans, I thought about the times wearing them. Then I thought about the people, particularly [as seen] in advertising, who made jeans into what they are today,” says Berry. “I found it fascinating that because some icons wore jeans, it led to us all wearing them. For most, a pair of jeans is the default garment in the wardrobe. Denim is the only material I feel truly comfortable wearing.”

Berry is literally surrounded by denim 24 hours a day. “I have approximately 3,000 pairs of jeans in my studio—it is a sea of blue. I have a room with just greys and blacks. I also have many jeans hanging on the walls. While it may look like a mess, it’s my organized mess, and I do remember where certain jeans are. I

also organize by shade and by wash and those with interesting characteristics.” Most of his inventory is donated from brands, mills, friends, and people who send packages from all around the world. “The studio is very large. I need it for all of the jeans. I often joke that people love the studio more than my work!” His studio overlooks the oldest canal in London, and is a haven of peace for him. He lives above the studio in an apartment that used to be a dog biscuit factory with his wife, who is from Sweden, and their five-year-old son.

Berry requires few tools to create his art. “It is quite simple. It’s my scissors—sharp for detail; blunt for portraits—glue, and my hands. I rarely sew, but have on occasion. I work directly from color photographs as you lose the detail in black-and-white photos.”

The color photographs also enable him to better see the effect of the light. “Lighting is so important. I always think about the way light hits things, such as a metallic subway car, a shiny polished bar top, the tiled floor, or a shimmering pool. I love to take denim, a matte material, and make it shine.”

To create a work, he first cuts a varying range of denim, usually starting with a palette of seven and adding more to create the layers in his work. “For example, the laundrette machine door alone has 15 layers. My goal is to blend the layers to make it look like it isn’t denim. Rather than using pockets and rivets, which would overemphasize that it’s denim, I like to use interesting pieces of denim to make it look like paint. I love it when someone looks at my work and suddenly says (particularly in a cool American accent), ‘Oh my God, it’s made of blue jeans!’ My work is so much more than denim, which is just my paint.”



Ian Berry in the *Secret Garden* installation

2017

Photo by Lucinda Grange

Berry's work is defined by his attention to detail. His art, while breathtaking in photos, truly needs to be seen in person to appreciate its intricacies, the labor of love that goes into each piece, and the message being portrayed.

His work portrays contemporary life and current issues. "I depict the fading urban fabric that makes up our communities such as the local pubs and laundrettes that are closing down. Places where people had interacted in the past are fading," expresses Berry. "And while we are much more connected thanks to technology, in person it is becoming less."

Berry typically works in series, which can take up to a year to put together, and *Behind Closed Doors* is one of his favorites. "This body portrayed beautiful, *Elle Decoration* magazine-style homes but was juxtaposed with a single person, who sat in the dream of materialism but appears

so alone," explains Berry. "It really connected with people, and many said, 'This is me.' It was really moving to see all kinds of people express this. I am very proud of this body of work because at the time, I was also working with Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM), a British movement against male suicide—the leading cause of death for men under 45 in the UK."

After doing *Behind Closed Doors*, his work took a different direction. "I wanted to go brighter, happier. I had been in Los Angeles, California, and had a great time. I began working on *Hotel California*, which was inspired by the hotels I stayed at and their pools," says Berry. "I wanted to bring that brightness into my London doom and gloom. I also wanted to challenge myself with water, particularly the ripples. The details just went on and on. If I decided I didn't want something in or I wanted to add something, it was particularly

Secret Garden installation

Close-up | 2017

Photo by Lucinda Grange

difficult because I had to also deal with the reflection."

Installations have become a big part of Berry's work in the last few years. *Secret Garden* includes the last denim manufactured in America by Cone Mills after 112 years of production. The work was initially exhibited at Children's Museum of the Arts in New York City and is now being requested by other museums worldwide and even famous department stores.

"I say no paint, no bleach, no dyes in my work, and that holds true for my installations. The only exception I make just for my installation work is that I cannot cut everything by hand," confesses Berry. "I use my friends at Tonello [a garment finishing technologies company] in Italy to laser cut some things like the vines in *Secret Garden*. Some may say it's cheating, but it's the tools the denim industry uses now, and it allows me to do bigger creations."



I Had to Stop for the Night

24 x 48 inches | 2019

Photo by Debbie Bragg



The Gently Revolving Drum Goes Quiet

20 x 48 inches | 2015

Photo by ianberry art



The Laundry

Approximately 10 x 18 x 10 feet | 2017

Photo by Lucinda Grange

Berry's hope for *Secret Garden* was to inspire children to tap into their imaginations to become more creative. He often offers free lessons for children. "I really believe in education to inspire children and to also help schools that are now underfunded."

He finds denim crosses borders, languages, cultures, and more. "It allows me to communicate to many people. I truly believe there is something in the denim that draws people in. People who are normally scared of a gallery tell me they just had to come in. I think there is something familiar and comfortable in the denim that does that," muses Berry. "You don't need to be an expert to enjoy or wear denim. It's the material of our time, and since I portray contemporary life, I don't think there's a better material to use." ■

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

Customize color studies to discover favorite palettes

by Regina B Dunn

I've studied color theory through books and talks, but it has been valuable to me to create my own color studies. Even though I create art using fabric, I find cardstock to be a better medium to study color relationships. That's because I can paint the paper any hue, tint, or shade I want in just a few minutes, as opposed to having to buy fabric in colors that may not be exactly what I need.

I use a few colors of Prochem fabric paint to mix all the others. For some studies, I need the perfect hues found on a twelve-color color wheel. To ensure the outcome, I bought a set of premade papers called Color-aid to use as a reference point.

To start, I paint pieces of cardstock with pure hues, tints, and shades, referring to the Color-Aid papers. Then I cut my painted papers into ¾-inch squares. Using a blank, white piece of cardstock for a background and support, I assemble a design on top with the colored squares. Once I have a design, I glue the squares down and write comments on the back of the card. I store them in a three-ring binder in clear plastic sleeves.

My latest study involved the effects of warm and cool colors on each other. I started by making two grids: one cool (**Figure 1A**) with squares of green, blue-green, blue, blue-violet, and violet in pure hues, and the other warm (**Figure 2A**) with squares of pure hues of yellow, orange, red-orange, and red. Then I took some time to analyze them. I



Figure 1A



Figure 1B



Figure 2A



Figure 2B



Figure 3A



Figure 3B



Figure 4A



Figure 4B

usually like cool colors better than warm ones, but looking at these two, I definitely like the warm one better. When I took photos of them and converted them to black and white, I realized why. The warm one (**Figure 2B**) has a lot more contrast in value. That's because yellow is the lightest color and is about one-third lighter than red. So in this composition, the yellow is light, the orange acts as a medium, and the red acts as the dark. A little more than half is medium with accents of light and dark, which provide interest and the ability to visually rank the colors and see designs. In the cool color range (**Figure 1B**), there are no light value colors. The composition I created has a nice variety of colors, but is all medium and dark hues. No real accents stand out and it is harder to find a pattern.

Next I wanted to see if a color can stand out if it is a different temperature, but the same value. I created the

same cool-colored grid, but replaced one square with a red that was about the same value as the colors surrounding it. It immediately acted as a focal point. Then, I added a red with a lighter value and it stood out much more than the same-value red (**Figure 3A** and **Figure 3B**).

So, yes, a different temperature color can act as a focal point, but is much more interesting if it is a different value too. The cool colors stand out on the warm grid because they are so much darker in value than the warm colors (**Figure 4A** and **Figure 4B**). If I had instead put a tint of cool colors on the grid that were the same value as the pure hues of the warm, it wouldn't have been as interesting, even though they would act as focal points.

The next part of my study was with complementary colors. I chose to use yellow-orange and blue-violet. First, I painted cardstock with three tints and three shades of each color

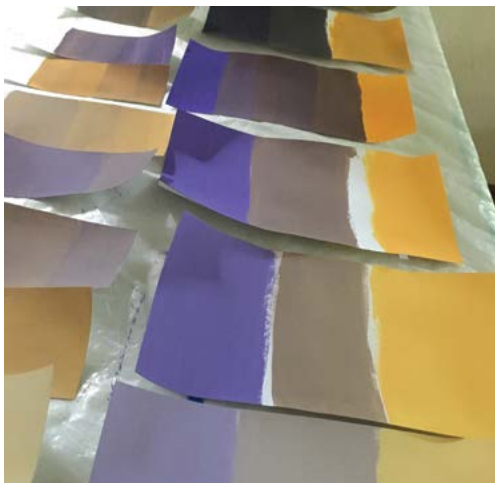


Figure 5

as well as the pure hues. I also mixed the complementary colors together in various ratios to get a series of less intense hues and neutrals for each tint and shade and pure color (Figure 5). Then I placed the cut squares of each on one piece of cardstock to rank each tint, shade, pure hue, and neutral according to value (Figure 6A). I knew yellow was the lightest color and violet was the darkest, but still discovered some surprises (Figure 6B). For example, the lightest tint I made of blue-violet is darker than not only the tints and pure hue of yellow-orange, but also of the shades of yellow-orange. It needs to be a very dark shade of yellow-orange to equal the value of the pure blue-violet. All of the yellow-oranges, even the shades, fooled my eye into thinking they were darker than they actually were. The lightest tints of blue-violet seemed much lighter to my eye than the camera saw.

The first grid (Figure 7A), with tints of blue-violet and shades of yellow-orange, at first looked like it had some interest due to the cool-warm contrast. But, according to the camera, all the squares have medium value (Figure 7B). I realized that it wasn't that expressive after I created one with the same blue-violet tints, but with a darker shade of yellow-orange (Figure 8A). In this one, there is quite a difference in value in

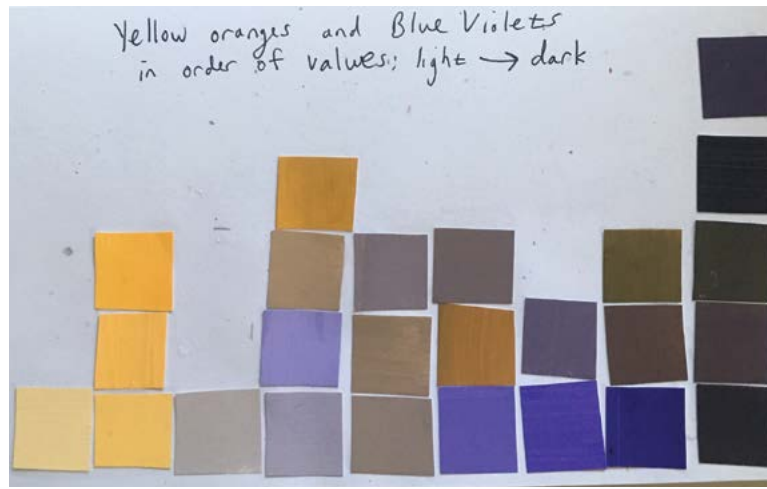


Figure 6A

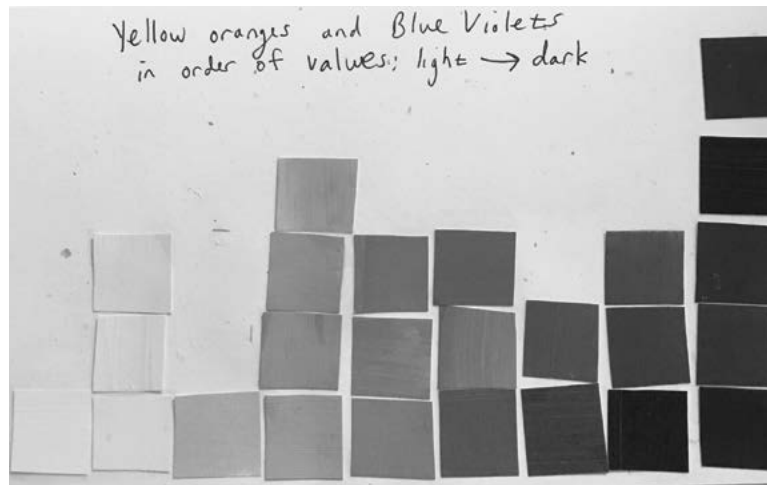


Figure 6B



Figure 7A



Figure 7B



Figure 8A

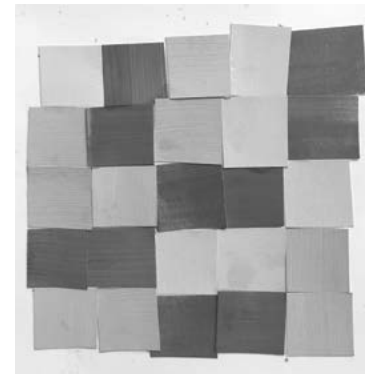


Figure 8B

addition to the temperature difference (Figure 8B). Value wins out again even though this darker yellow-orange isn't as intense or saturated as the yellow-orange in the other one.

To wrap up this study, I wanted to create some grids with the complements in varying values and intensities to check out the effects these properties cause and see if one has a greater effect than the other. I created two grids with about the same amount of neutrals and placed the most intense square (pure yellow-orange) in the same location on both (Figure 9A and Figure 10A). The difference between the grids was that one had few medium values (Figure 9B). Since that grid had a lot of darks and lights, neither value stood out. The other contained mostly medium values (Figure 10B), so the smaller quantity of the lights and darks were more noticeable. But that layout didn't have any interesting patterns to guide the eye. So I created the last one (Figure 11A) with mostly medium values and about the same amount of neutrals, but arranged the values (Figure 11B) to form a stair-step pattern in the middle; I also placed most of the warm colors on one side of the diagonal and cool hues on the other. This formed a pleasing arrangement. There was adequate contrast due mainly to the values, but also due to the temperature differences.

Art is always subjective and one arrangement of colors and values may appeal to one person, but not to

another. It is interesting and informative to take some time to analyze which arrangements you do and do not like and apply the results in your work. ■

Regina B Dunn is a SAQA member residing in DeLand, Florida. You can view her work at reginabdunn.com.



Figure 9A



Figure 9B



Figure 10A

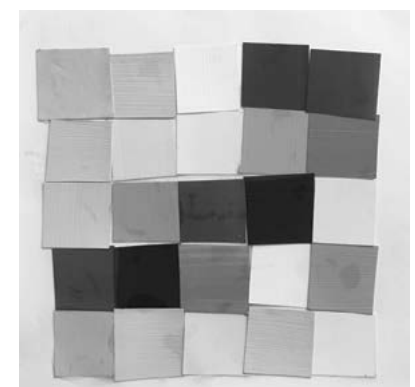


Figure 10B



Figure 11A

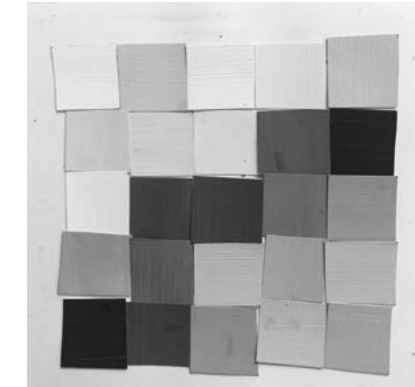


Figure 11B

These books are recommended by the author to learn more about color theory:

Color: A Course in Mastering the Art of Mixing Colors, by Dr. Betty Edwards

Playing with Color: 50 Graphic Experiments for Exploring Color Design Principles, by Richard Mehl

Color and Composition for the Creative Quilter, by Katie Pasquini Masopust and Brett Barker

Color Magic for Quilters, by Ann Seely and Joyce Stewart

Words: Tricky, Slippery, and Precise

Choose yours wisely

by Quinn McDonald

Words shape our thoughts into reality, but words are tricky. Word choice and word order are the main culprits that can slide us quite unexpectedly into awkward moments.

One of those moments came when I was a volunteer at an art supply convention. Teaching outside your studio is always tricky work. Success depends on carefully planned supplies and checklists. On the first day of the convention, five experimenters happily worked on an art project at my table.

My job was straightforward: run the demo twice a day plus do one *Oh, wow!* project each day. *Oh, wow!* projects get their name from the delighted sighs of the audience as they watch art transformed into practical objects. In this case, I was surface decorating a piece of paper and then making it into a photo mat.

As I happily worked with the people exploring creativity at my table, I was surprised to see Jean, the marketing manager of the store I was representing, rush over.

"The 11 a.m. *Oh, wow!* project didn't show up," Jean said. "Could you do yours now?" I glanced at my experimenters. I didn't want to abandon them. Jean noticed my concern. Smiling, she said, "I'll cover your table for you." She knew the project. Her clever solution to finish the project was perfect. "Thanks," I said, and headed to the high counter.

The microphone was clipped to my lapel, my papers were in order under the counter. Ready! I glanced back at the table to see Jean throw a bed sheet over my project leftovers and the participants leaving. This was not what I thought was going to happen. Then I replayed what she had said: "I'll cover your table for you." She had meant it literally—she would protect

my art supplies from theft by covering them. I had interpreted it as, "I'll do your job."

Both of us were right. The phrase can be understood either way. I didn't ask, and she didn't explain because we each knew what the other meant. Except, lacking mind-reading abilities, we could not know.

The story is a perfect example of the problem with the English language: syntax is squishy and easily molded. It has few rules and hundreds of exceptions. Your grammar checker is wrong quite often, too.

No matter what you write, from an email to an artist's statement, words shape what others think of you. It's not what you say as much as what others hear. How can you be clear?

- Don't go with your first draft. It's never finely tuned.
- Read your writing out loud; it helps you hear it as your audience does.
- Have someone else read your writing and ask them, "What is the main idea you get?"
- You may be surprised at what others hear. Rewriting saves your communication.

Words that are spelled the same are pronounced differently in context. There is a 60-second *minute*, but a tiny difference is called *minute*. Read is both present tense and past tense, but pronounced differently. You can *object* if you don't like something, but if that "thing" is an *object*, you'll hear that verbs and nouns aren't always pronounced the same.

You may be a beacon of clarity, but only to yourself. To make your writing precise, word choice is critical. It's not just fabric, it's cotton, silk, wool,

maybe a blend? Are you cutting or tearing the fabric? Is it an edge or a selvage? Sure, you are using thread, but what kind or brand and why did you choose it?

Some of your readers or students may be experienced, but some may be beginners. They both need help, but in different ways.

The world of color also demands precision. It may be light green for you, but to others it could be celadon, apple green, sage, mint, or sea-glass green.

When the sentence says, "The mayor talked about the high cost of living with several women," do we understand that

“No matter what you write, ... words shape what others think of you.”

living with several women is expensive, or that the audience was a group of women? Word order is important.

The news reader said, "A body was found in the Sonoran Desert yesterday, half-eaten by Game and Fish employees." The employees did not dispatch anyone, but it sounded like they did. Word order also created that problem.

The sign read, "Hunters please use caution when hunting pedestrians using walk trails." A period after "hunting" would help pedestrians feel safer.

It's not a good idea to say, "Well, you *know* what I meant," because your audience knows only what they think you meant. They will act on their belief. Make it the same as yours by choosing your words carefully. ■

Quinn McDonald is a writer who helps people grow into the stories they tell about themselves. Learn more about her at quinncreative.com.

The Longarm: A game changer in art quilt design

by Candice Phelan

Some innovative SAQA artists have found that creating art quilt designs can be easier, faster, and more effective on these machines, whether they are sit-down or stand-up models. By joining the new SAQA Special Interest Group (SIG), Art Quilt Design on Longarm and Midarm Machines, you can connect with our growing group as we experiment, share, and learn from each other. Each month, a different artist shares techniques via live video. A group discussion follows where ideas on what works are shared.

Topics include appliqué, couching, thread painting, piecing, binding, ruler work, best threads, paper piecing, unconventional materials such as leather or metal, and more.

New horizons

One innovator in the multiple uses of a longarm is Lea McComas. She uses her machine to create realistic pictorial works conveying stories about the human experience. McComas builds her design layer and then densely thread paints her designs, sometimes using two threads in the needle as she shades and highlights. "I lay down a basic design in fabric, similar to a base layer or under-painting, and use my longarm to blend the hard lines and add extra detail."

Sarah Ann Smith is known for her collaged fabric with intense thread painting and quilting done on a



Sarah Ann Smith
She persisted in her quest to reach the shore and sing the anthem of the sea
59 x 80 inches | 2017

sit-down midarm machine. Her current work celebrates her home environs of MidCoast Maine. "Once the component parts of an image are collaged and complete, I use my midarm machine to join the parts to create the overall image." Sometimes Smith uses paint to further blend the fabrics by printing, stenciling, or painting on the cloth. Finally, she selects threads that allow her to blend and refine her imagery.

Phyllis Cullen's captivating tropical art quilts are also made on a longarm machine, including the binding. In case you think these machines are difficult to use, consider this: Cullen's young granddaughters make their own quilts this way. Children can guide the machine head by the handles, keeping their hands clear of the needle.

Benefits and drawbacks

Why would anyone want to use a midarm or longarm to create their design layer? The obvious benefit is a workspace of approximately 2.5 by 13 feet. You can see much more of your design as you work. Because your design is held flat and still while you glide the machine head over the fabrics, there's no scrunching up your fabric to thread paint. Even a sit-down midarm machine has at least 16 inches of workspace, and your work is usually spread out on a 36-inch table. You can sew much faster, which makes dense thread painting quicker. Plus, new techniques and tools, including templates, rulers, and presser feet, are being developed all the time.

There are some challenges to owning such a large machine. The obvious one is that it takes up



Lea McComas
Bike Boys
 46 x 83 inches | 2014
 Photo by Ken Sanville

considerable space. However, almost every inch of the space under a longarm machine can serve as storage. The table frames made by Texas-based Innova, a SAQA sponsor, can be custom-ordered by the foot. Other brands are available in a variety of lengths.

Cost is another issue, but art quilters have an advantage since we tend to develop our own designs, lessening or eliminating the need for the expensive software that automates machine quilting. To reduce cost, some art quilters purchase a used machine. Others chip in to buy one

together or rent time on a machine from a local dealer.

Another challenge of a longarm can be viewing your design from a distance since your work is mounted on a frame. There are now quick-release holders to allow easy demounting so that you can view your piece on a design wall. Some art quilters have discussed mounting a mirror above the longarm frame to allow viewing from a greater distance.

Machine features

A stand-up machine typically provides you with a workspace that

is 16 to 32 inches wide by a chosen frame length; about 6 inches of space is taken up by the frame bars. You can stand up or sit on a stool to use this style of machine; many frames are adjustable for height.

A sit-down model has a stationary machine with about a 16-inch throat between the needle and the back of the machine; some makes are deeper. The table space is often about 30 or 36 inches square and it is usually about 30 inches high.

Innovations, such as digital photography and art, allow for new

see "The Longarm" on page 37



Sarah Ann Smith
Rose Hip
 36 x 36 inches | 2019



Candice Phelan's Purple Yin Yang was created on her longarm machine.



Russ Little
Interplay #2
 33 x 26.5 inches | 2019

Art Cloth Network Turns 20

from page 17

edge of the textile art field. Dunnewold notes the recent prevalence of textural and abstract work as a new area of exploration. Recently, members have brought more mixed media, sculptural work, use of gut, transparency, layering, and bolder stitching to the expansion of the medium. No longer is the finished artwork exclusively a two-yard silk panel.

ACN members, several of whom are also SAQA members, meet annually across North America to share current artwork, plan future exhibitions, handle business issues, and inspire each other. It has intentionally remained an intimate group, and currently has twenty-eight juried members from the United States and Canada.

Learn about individual members through profile links on the ACN website. Applications for membership are open most autumns. Visit artclothnetwork.com for details. Exhibition catalogs can be viewed at behance.net/ArtClothNetwork. ■

Deborah Weir is a member of ACN and SAQA. She resides in California and has exhibited her work on six continents. Visit deborahweir.net to learn more about her art.

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To Register: 970-931-2725 | 43200 Hwy 141 | Gateway, CO 81522
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Quilt Detail: KaBoom! by Tere D'Amato

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For full details, visit saqa.com/spotlight

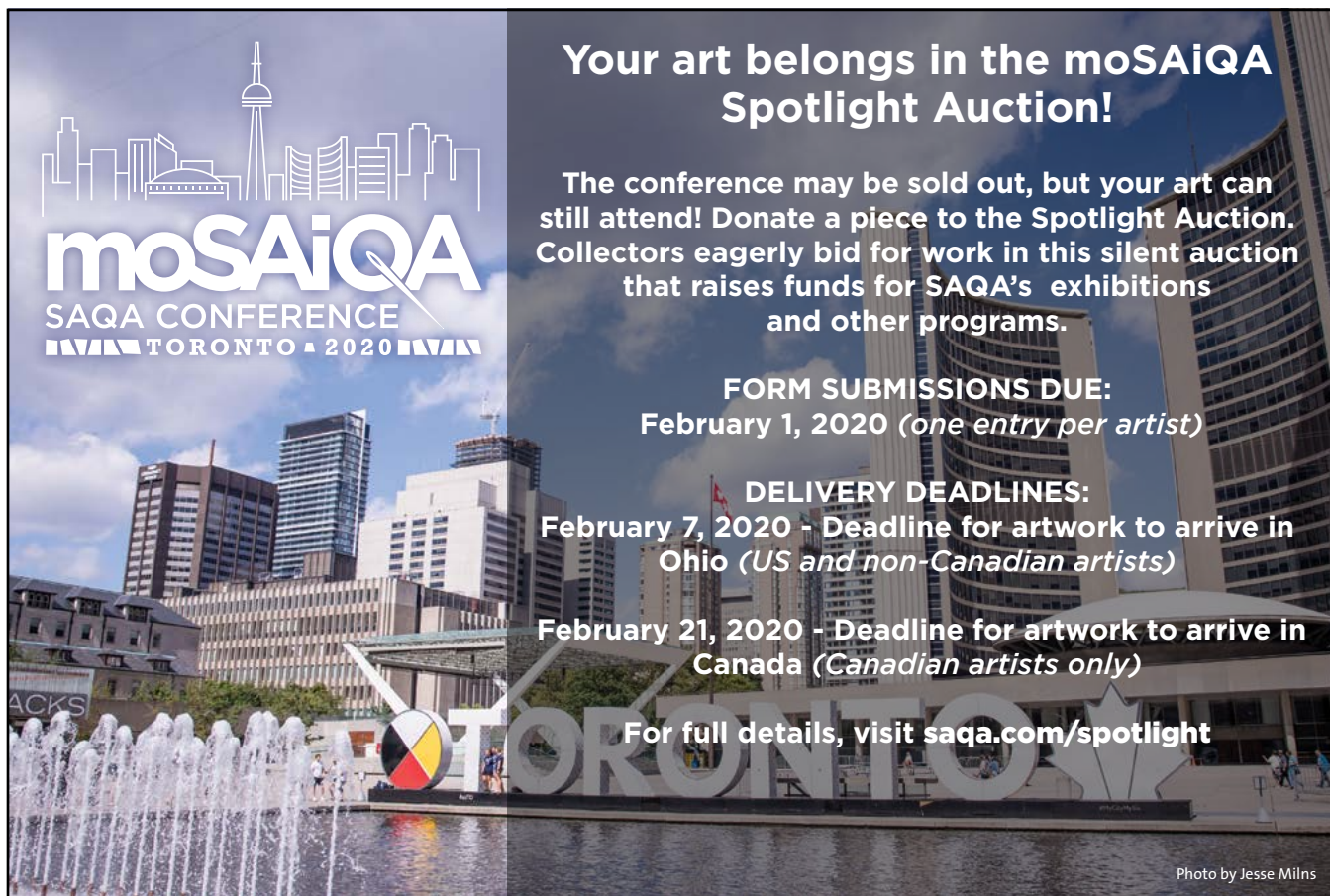


Photo by Jesse Milns

In Memoriam

from page 6

in Lincoln from May 17 through September 22, 2019.

During her 32-year art career, her works were exhibited in Europe, Asia, and throughout the United States. Her textiles were juried into more than 30 exhibitions and featured in more than 25 publications. She received the Quilt Japan Prize from *Quilt Visions* in 1997 and the Award of Excellence from *Quilt National* in 2017. Most recently, she won the *Excellence in Fibers 2019* award for Wall/Floor Works.

Margot Jensen was born in August 1947 and passed away in September from inherited cardiomyopathy. She devoted her life to her family and to all forms of creativity.

Graduating from the University of California, Davis, in 1969, Margot exhibited her work in art galleries and museums throughout the United States, including the Denver Art Museum and the Smithsonian. A national lecturer, Margot also published many articles about art.

One of her favorite endeavors was being the curator of a number of special exhibitions in Colorado. She also enjoyed becoming a dancer/choreographer by forming the Hoofin' High Country Cloggers in Denver and teaching and performing throughout the state.

She was very grateful to have fulfilled her childhood dreams of becoming a respected artist, mother, wife, dancer, choreographer, writer, and teacher. She was delighted to be "Yaya" to her four grandchildren, and proud to be the keeper of multigenerational documents and photos from her family's eight ancestral lines.

She was proud of her role as an artist facilitator, working for five years with female inmates in a California state prison. She also restored and donated dolls to needy and disabled children in Stockton, California.

We will miss the creative voices of these two talented artists. We extend our condolences to their families and friends.

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(Image Detail: Christine Aaron, *Vestiges II*, 2019, burnt drawing with stitching on hand made abaca paper, 18" x 12" x 0")

An advertisement for the Visions Art Museum's "Quilt Visions 2020" call for entries. The background is a collage of colorful quilt panels. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white box. The text includes the museum's name, the event title, dates, jurors' names, and contact information.

VISIONS ART MUSEUM
Contemporary Quilts + Textiles

Quilt Visions 2020

Call for Entries
January 1 to February 9, 2020

Jurors
Nancy Bavor, Melody Randol and Emily Richardson

Cash Awards

For more information, visit www.visionsartmuseum.org.

2825 Dewey Road, Suite 100
San Diego, CA 92106

City Side Lights, detail, Melody Randol



SAQA has provided support, counsel, information, inspiration, and joy over the twenty-seven years I have been a member. I have learned enormously from others in the organization. It has given me an opportunity to share my talents and dreams, and to help others do the same. I want SAQA's work to continue after my lifetime—the work of educating people about the art quilt and providing a “home” for artists like myself who are seeking to express themselves through art quilts. That's why I've left a gift to SAQA in my will.

—Judith Trager,
Board member, SAQA Legacy Circle donor

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In the digital age, we cannot escape our own images, whether taken as a selfie or found on social media. Does our image reflect our individual identity, or do we see what we are conditioned by society to see?

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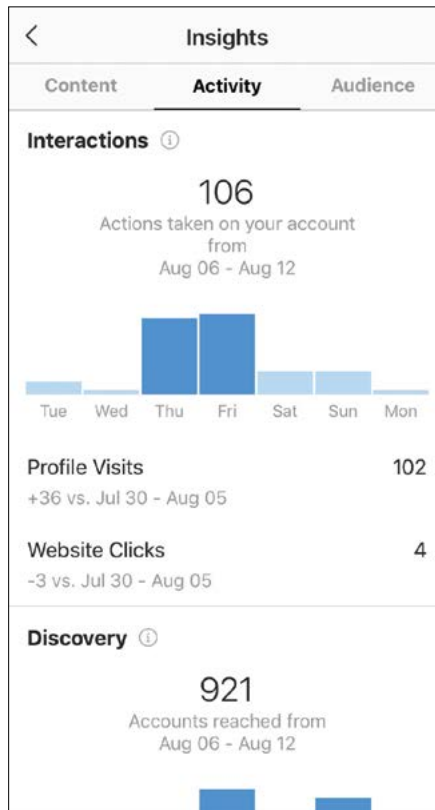
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Instagram Game

from page 19

gain new followers who may discover you. You can use a maximum of 30 hashtags per post, and experts say to use every one of them. It is currently open to debate whether there is much difference between putting hashtags in a caption versus in the first comment. It's more important that you do it at all. Don't feel like typing the most common ones you want to use all the time for each time you post? Copy and paste them from a note on your phone.

If you want to promote something, with a business account you can create promotions and ads on Instagram. Take a look at ads you receive on Instagram to see what elements prompt you to click on them. Typically, a video pushes people to take action, but a really great photo can be as effective. There are lots of tutorials



on YouTube that cover how to set up an Instagram ad.

Remember, your Insights tools will let you see how your efforts are paying off. You can see if your Instagram URL is being clicked, if your profile is being viewed, and whether your stories are effective.

By putting all of these best practice tips together, you will have a powerhouse Instagram account ready to take the world by storm! ■

Cheryl Sleboda is an award-winning fiber artist, costumer, and quilter who owns Muppin.com and SewMuchCo-splay.com. Sleboda travels and teaches sewing and quilting nationally. She also teaches business management and more to entrepreneurs in the fiber arts industry. She has been featured in many magazines and has a DVD called Heirloom Sewing Techniques for Today's Quilter.

SAQA THANKS YOU!

Our 2019 Benefit Auction was a success because of you, the 443 talented artists who donated a piece and the many bidders who fell in love with them.

Your action supports SAQA's exhibition programs, publications, and education outreach. Plus, each purchase increases recognition for art quilts and the artists who make them.

We can't wait for next year!
Watch for 2020 donation and bidding details.

www.saqa.com/auction



The Longarm

from page 31

techniques in today's art quilts. Access to more flexible machines, with all the new tools and techniques being created for them, will provide quilt artists with new capabilities. For example, with a blank "canvas," quilt artists can make large, sweeping marks and designs across entire compositions. They can sketch, thread paint, and combine fabrics across larger areas, and they can shade and highlight with all types of threads.

SIG brings growth

To learn more, consider joining the SIG and its associated Facebook page. You don't have to be an expert to join, just a SAQA member. Because this is a new area of interest, most SIG members are new to this approach. The group's motto is: "We are all learners and we are all teachers." It is a sentiment that reflects how we share experiments, lessons learned, challenges, and solutions.

Art Quilt Design on Longarm and Midarm Machines meets on the fourth Thursday of each month, January through October, at 6 p.m. ET. Each session is advertised as a Facebook Event and all sessions are recorded and listed in the Files section, along with photos and/or presentations shown during the session. The SIG sessions are now using live video to show the featured artists' studios and work. For more information on how to join and a current schedule, visit saqa.com/groups. ■

Candice Phelan is a member of the SAQA Board of Directors. She resides in Wellington, Florida. She was part of the planning team for Art Quilt Design on Longarm and Midarm Machines SIG; other planners were Lea McComas, Phyllis Cullen, and Sarah Ann Smith.



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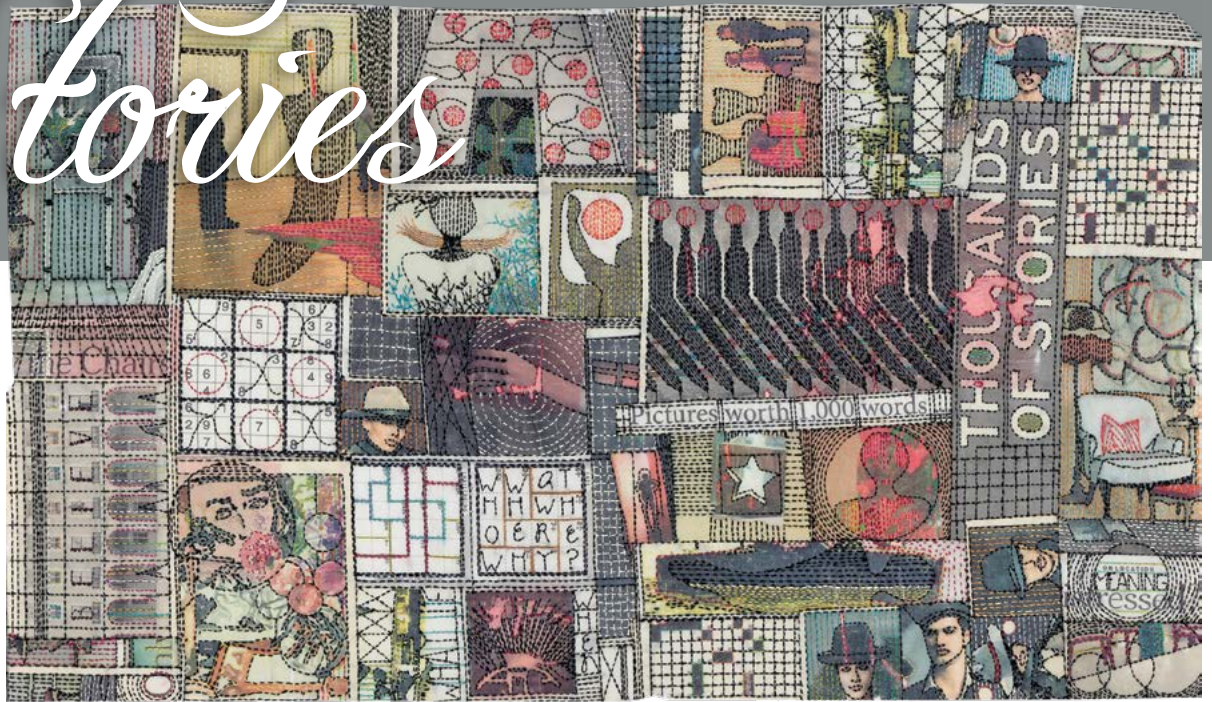
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Stories

by N.K. Quan



Mary Ruth Smith

Thousands of Stories

15 x 27 inches | 2011

Exploring the ability of images to tell a story was the inspiration for Dr. Mary Ruth Smith's *Thousands of Stories*. The first in her *Stitched Statements* series, this quilt creates new visual narratives through images primarily sourced from newspapers.

The concept for the series evolved from Smith's interest in the visual impact of pictures. In her youth, she would spend countless hours devouring newspapers, catalogs, magazines, and other printed materials. Today, she keeps a collection of clipped and torn pictures as well as text saved from newspapers for use in her art. "My composition is a mixture of images and text that I find appealing. They present an unexpected juxtaposition of stories."

Her interest in advertising is another influence on the design of *Thousands of Stories*. Advertising tells a story and appeals to our emotions, hopes, and dreams, she says. "I like exploring the ways print advertising uses art and

design to capture our attention and get us to act. I think print ads prompt the viewer to create a story from the way a product or service is portrayed."

In the same manner, the images in each of the work's panels tell a story, or provide the foundation for the viewer to create their own story. While the panel structure appears to be an organizational element, the frames are not uniform, which adds a chaotic sense of separation between individual stories.

"We are inundated with a wealth of visual information and stimuli on a daily basis; and, at some point, they all run together. That simultaneous flood of information is part of what the piece is expressing."

To compose the piece, Smith placed a barrage of pictures on her work table. Some had personal meaning, some were selected for visual appeal, and others for specific subject matter. The images were then laminated to silk organza using a modified technique she learned from a

YouTube video featuring mixed-media artist Claire Benn. As she began to stitch, she decided to add her own drawings and marks. Mummy-like figures and words, such as believe, who, and what, were added and stitched. Other elements also were enhanced with stitching.

"My materials and techniques are simple ones. In the hand stitching that I do, I use mainly a backstitch, sometimes a simple running stitch or seeding stitch." She prefers hand stitching to machine stitching. "It's the hands-on action of using a needle and thread to physically move stitches through the fabric that creates the kind of lines and shapes I'm looking for."

Smith is an award-winning fiber and fabric design artist, a SAQA JAM, and educator living in Waco, Texas. She is a professor of art at Baylor University, also in Waco.

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



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