



# MYSTIC

fiberarts guild of pittsburgh

# SUMMIT



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The Fiberarts Guild of Pittsburgh has a long and lovely history with Touchstone Center for Crafts. It is wonderful to be able to continue the relationship with this incredible opportunity. *Mystic Summit*, appropriately titled as our members travel into the wild to congregate, is a grouping of work that spans many materials and techniques from fifteen of our members. *Into the Mystique*, a solo show by Carolyn Carson, was born out of a unique opportunity to fill the Iron Gate Gallery with a featured member. As we converge at this distant retreat to experience the work in these two shows, it is a true meeting of the minds in a place of such peace and beauty. It's a great time for clarity, fresh new perspectives, and an amazing bunch of humans to share the view.

Staci Offutt and Kitty Savel  
Exhibition co-chairs

MAY 1 – MAY 25, 2015  
TOUCHSTONE CENTER FOR CRAFTS  
FARMINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA



fiberarts guild  
of pittsburgh, inc.



## JUROR'S STATEMENT

I accepted the call to act as juror for this guild-sponsored show with no small amount of trepidation. The entrants were, by and large, friends and creative comrades. The process of jurying was of course anonymous, but I expected that much of the work would be known to me. However, it was not as familiar as I had anticipated! This is the great news for our guild: new energy, fresh creativity, and animated exploration of ideas and techniques. And a few artists whose work we have been admiring for years are breaking new ground.

*Mystic Summit* followed closely on the heels of a larger guild show at the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, presented a mere few months earlier. I am grateful to those artists who submitted top-quality work, and only regret that the limited space at Touchstone meant eliminating more than half of the submitted work. In several instances I chose two works by the same artist; and while this necessitated fewer artists represented, I felt that it made for a more coherent show. There was a strong showing from the quilters in our midst. The fact that the gallery wall space is somewhat dominated by quilts is a result of the strength of the submitted work, and not of any bias on my part.

Particular kudos should go to Carolyn Carson, who rose to the challenge of hanging a beautiful and coherent body of work in the Iron Gate Gallery. This leads me to think perhaps there should be more opportunities for guild members to submit larger portfolios of work, and one day there might be a large guild exhibition comprised of three to five individual shows.

Whenever it has been my privilege and responsibility to act as a juror, there has been a period of regret once I have cast the die. This show was particularly challenging because of the limited space (ahh, would that we had more sculptors in our midst...). Staci accepted my offer to install the show, and I felt gratified to unpack the work, find a home for each piece, and see how well it worked together. Thank you to all who submitted their work, and to all who encourage that work.

Jan Myers-Newbury

fiberarts guild of pittsburgh

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membership exhibition

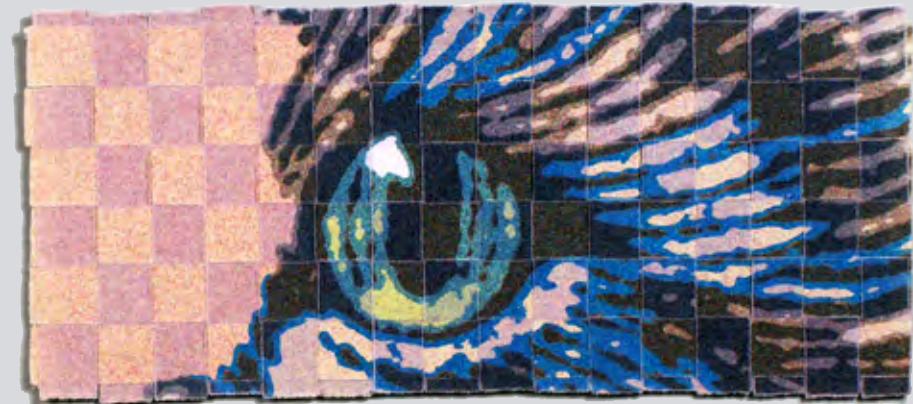
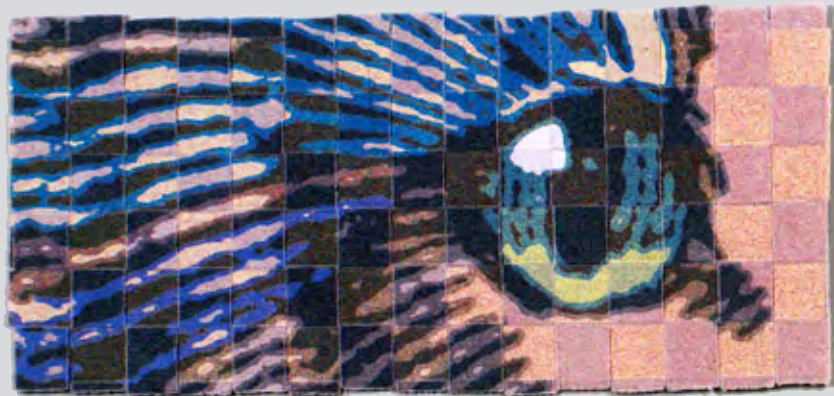
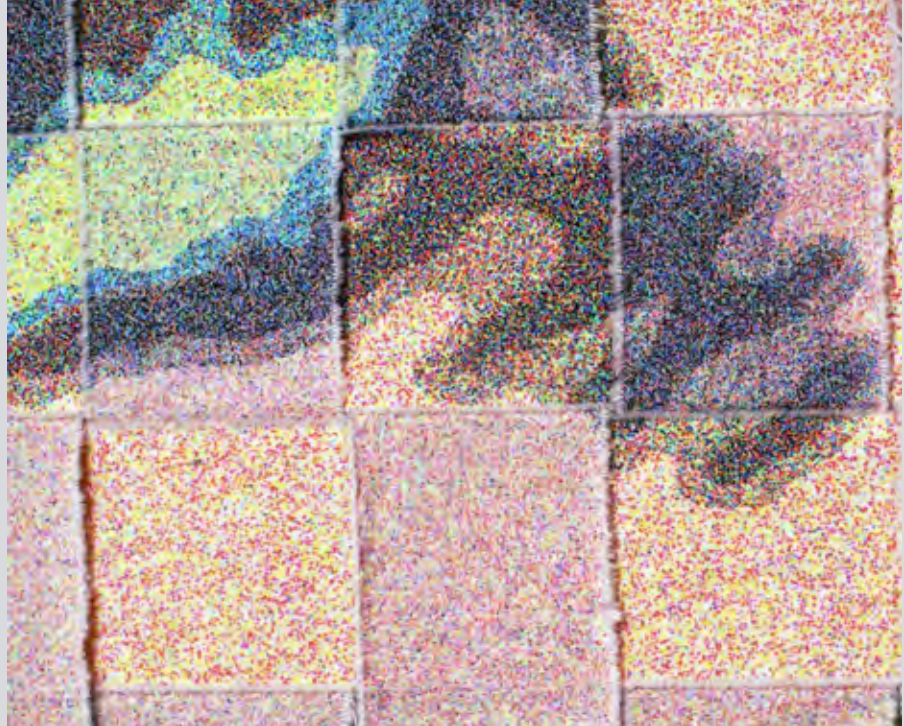
# MARY TOWNER

## **See No Evil**

12.5" x 57"

Printer ink, recycled bed sheet.

Digital imagery printed on cotton, ripped and woven.



A few years ago a friend gave me a cache of vintage silk embroidery floss with a cat's head logo on the label. Fascinated with the image, I embarked on a series subjecting it to extreme digital and manual manipulation. Here, the cat's eyes create an aura of mystery, seeming somewhat, but not really, human.



# MARY LOU ALEXANDER

## **Nightfall**

52" x 65"

MX Dyes, Fabric paint. Cotton cloth.

Arashi Shibori dyed. Machine pieced and quilted.







## Sunrise

39" x 66"

MX Dyes, Fabric paint. Cotton cloth.

Arashi Shibori dyed. Machine pieced and quilted.

As a biologist, I am fascinated by natural phenomena. For me, art, like science, brings order to the universe. I want my quilts to reflect the wonder and awe that I feel for the natural world. *Nightfall* and *Sunrise* are part of my series of quilts called Natural Phenomena. The series is inspired by events in nature on a grand scale.









# JAMES MALL

## Comrades

38" x 24" x 3"

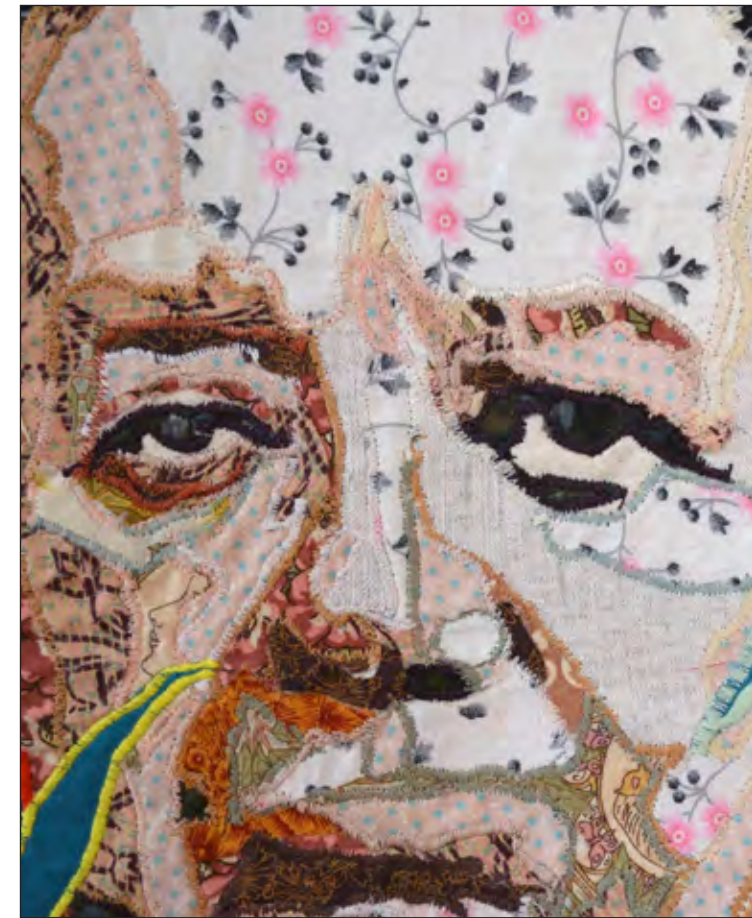
(inside) Fabric, thread, flocking, yarn, brass hinges.

(outside) Polyurethane, flocking, oil paint, spray paint, glitter, gold leaf edges.

Machine sewn applique, collage.

Through technology, people are inundated with hundreds of images of friends and family on a daily basis. My work is a response to this style of modern, "selfie" portraiture. My objective is to reinterpret this fleeting imagery, by slowing down and handworking it, rather than swiping it away with my finger.

Digital technology allows me to collect a diverse group of influences, many of which are sourced by from old technologies. These include Iznik ceramics, illuminated manuscripts, Central American Tree of Life sculptures, Mexican paper cuts, and Victorian daguerreotypes. My influences are distinct, just as a collage or quilt is made of a variety of fabrics and patterns, each with its own source and its own story.







## JOANNE BAST

### **Window Box Geraniums**

14" x 18" x 2"

Freeform machine embroidery.

Digitally manipulated photograph printed on cotton fabric; wooden shadowbox frame.



I begin with my own digitally manipulated photograph printed onto canvas backed cotton fabric then freeform stitch with hundreds of colors of sewing threads. The scene takes on a life of its own often deviating from the original photograph. The threads are used as a paint palette resulting in a scene entirely of stitching. The finished piece is either stitched onto suede cloth and framed or used as the focal point for a wall quilt.





### **One Red Window**

14" x 15.625" x 2"

Freeform machine embroidery.

Digitally manipulated photograph printed on cotton fabric;  
wooden shadowbox frame.

# WANDA SPANGLER-WARREN

## **Mindful**

16" x 14" x 8"

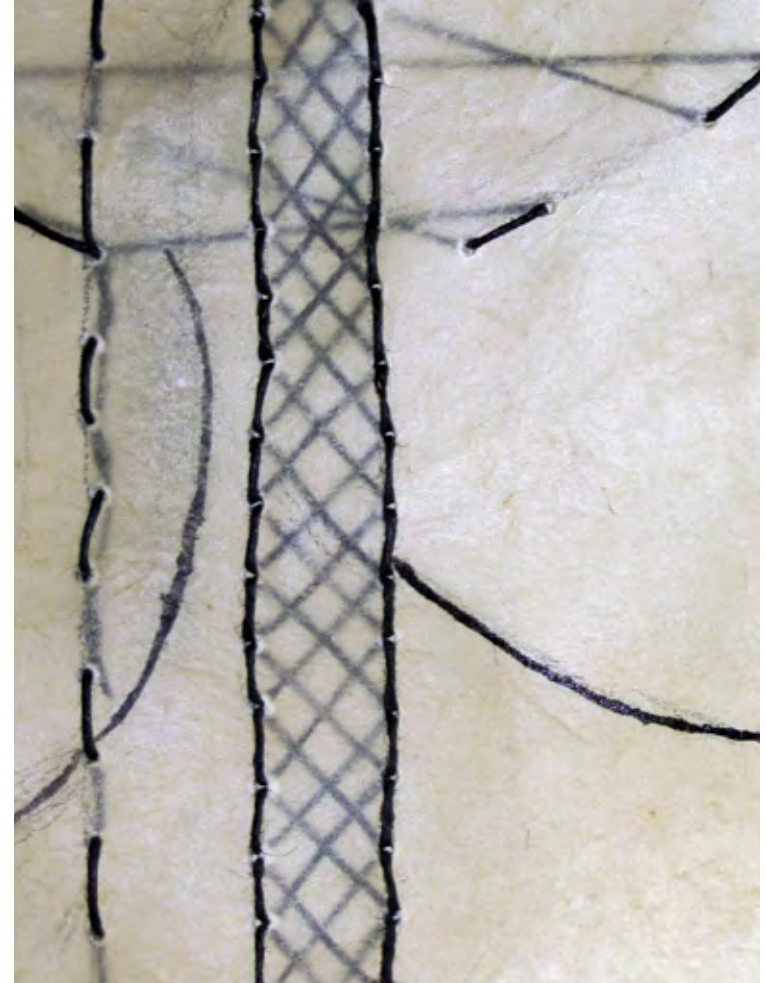
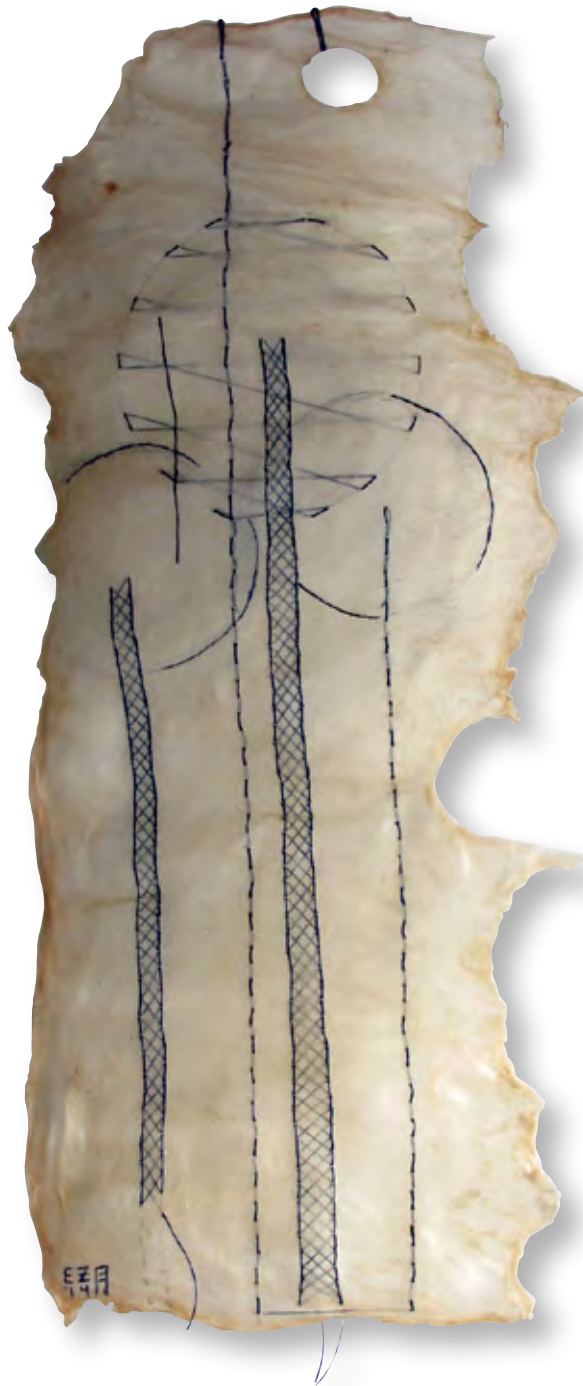
Paper, reed, wood, fluorescent light.

Paper laminated to reed and wood structure.

*Mystic Summit* finds me continuing to make my luminescent sculptures, structures of paper, wood, fabric, and light. These works translate my topographical impressions of Southwestern Pennsylvania and the foothills of my birthplace in East Tennessee along with patterns from my native and developing folk art languages. I enjoy producing colorful, glowing, and evocative pieces from humble and inexpensive materials. I can never get enough of the peace of light, silhouette of line, and drama of shadow in this art form. *Mindful* is a small and calm expression of it.







## EVAN ZAJDEL

### **Memory of Trees**

28" x 12" x 2"

Deerskin, waxed linen thread, India ink, pencil.

Shadow-work techniques, running stitch, open herringbone stitch, closed herringbone stitch, and double closed herringbone stitch.

A commentary on the overpopulation of white-tailed deer in Pennsylvania.

# CYNTHIA SMITH

## **Creme Puff Necklace**

18" long

Shantung fabric; pearl drops; hook latch.

My motivation for sewing the Rosette Puff design dates back to the 18th and 19th centuries. Traditionally, women sewed this pattern to keep their families warm during cold seasons. My grandmother being one of those women cut and gathered circular pieces of fabric together to make puff quilts. Now I see taking that original art design and mixing it with a new decorative flair.

The *Creme Puff Necklace* was inspired for a wedding. I used Shantung Glitter Soft Creme fabric, surrounded by pearl beads, puff sizes range from 3" to 5", magnetic closure in back of necklace, measures 16" long.







## PASSLE HELMINSKI

### **Surprise**

33" x 22" x 21"

Rayon.

Knit.

I use tubular knitting in my art to create energetic forms that go between the seemingly sleek and the organic. *Surprise's* movement and shadows take the viewer to the elements of dance and music. When I look at yarn I do not see a sweater but limitless possibilities.





E.K. JEONG

**Formation Esquisse 1**

24" x 14" x 15"

Pulp, wire, and Sumi Ink.

Papermaking.

I respect materials and their natural characteristics. I try not to over-complicate their beauty. I have learned to let forms, colors, and techniques emerge from the process of studying materials. I do rough sketches. My sketches are something like blueprints featuring scribbles about techniques, materials, textures, and colors for projects. A sketch to me is simply a visual meditation, but I practice another form of sketch (esquisse) using actual materials when I produce my study pieces. Naturally, the process of my art making is continuous revisions in material studies.



### **Formation Esquisse 3**

12" x 12" x 25"

Pulp, wire, and Sumi Ink.

Papermaking.





## PATRICIA KENNEDY-ZAFRED

### Bashagi Mines: Dawn

50.75" x 36.25"

Kona cotton, procion dyes, textile inks, acrylic paints, glass seed beads.  
(Original images courtesy Dietmar Temps, with permission.)

Silkscreened images; machine pieced and quilted.

Near Kibish in South Ethiopia, the Bashagi goldmines attract young members of the Suri people who hike an unpaved field road for two days to a small, nearby living station. There they stay for up to ten days, working long hours, digging and panning for gold. Young women often see the mines as an adventure and opportunity, hoping to earn money to buy seed or possibly a cow. Through pattern, color and imagery, the intent is to express the vibrancy and beauty in the peaceful, yet determined faces of these two Suri women.

photos by Larry Berman





### **Bashagi Mines: Dusk**

50.5" x 38"

Kona cotton, procion dyes, textile inks, acrylic paints, glass seed beads. (Original images courtesy Dietmar Temps, with permission.)

Silkscreened images; machine pieced and quilted.





## PETRA FALLAUX

### **Formations #18**

55" x 55"

Hand-dyed pima cottons.

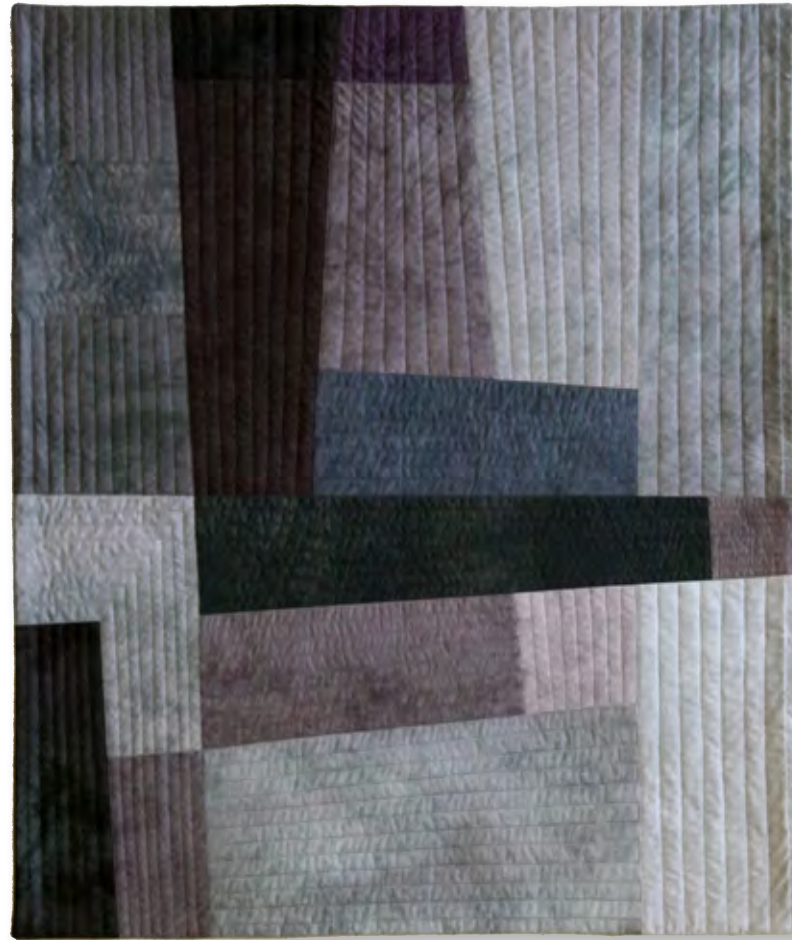
Machine pieced and quilted.



Formations is an ongoing series that embodies my credo: shape, color, and simplicity. Having grown up in the Netherlands, I find I'm most attracted to spare geometric forms. Regimented polder landscapes, rectangular color fields, immense skies above seamless horizons have all inspired my work, at times intentionally but most often intuitively.

*Formations #18* explores embedding color in fields of greys; with distant perspectives transforming rectangular shapes into wedges. The grey sky embraces, yet also squeezes the vibrancy of colors. They are ruled and dulled by their relative positions in space and time.

*Formations #20* conjures up sky, wind, wicks, and fields. Its mood brings me back to Dutch overcast days, one after another, with no variation in sight but downpour to drizzle, drizzle to downpour.

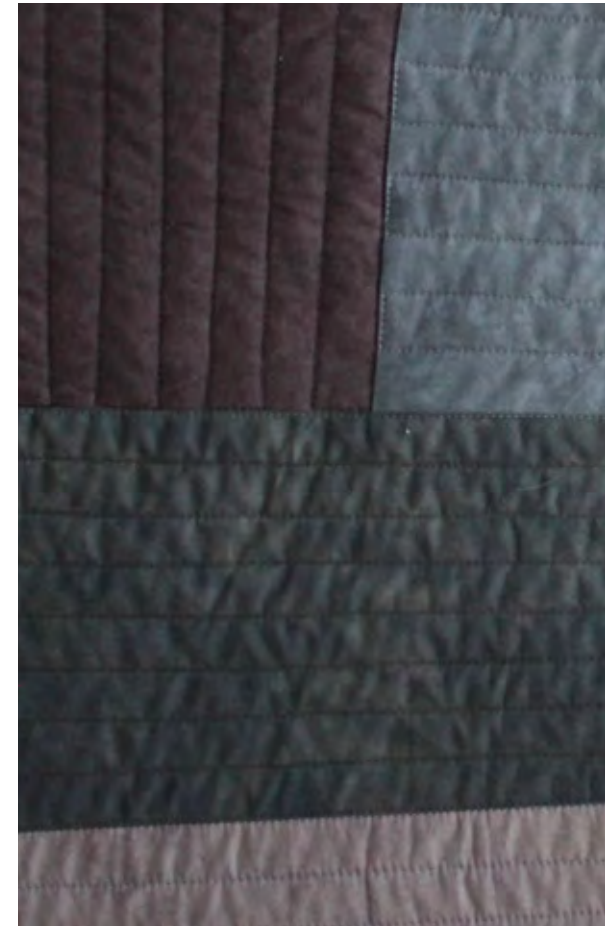


### **Formations #20**

47" x 37"

Hand-dyed pima cottons.

Machine pieced and quilted.



## KATRINA SHORTER-HARRISON



### **Haiti H2O**

8" x 10" x 12"

Multimedia yarn sculpture.

Crochet.

In 2013, I was approached to create a piece that would support my church's mission trip to earthquake-ravaged Haiti. On the Internet I found a photo of a lady hunched over a washtub outside of a collapsed house. This picture spoke to me directly. Growing up, my family wasn't poor but we weren't rich, either. And there was a time when my mother had to resort to doing laundry in washtubs. I used a plastic bottle, a wooden box, yarn, craft eyes, stones, and rocks to yarn-sculpt this lady into a bank and a treasure box.





## Piano Man

12" x 12" x 12"

Multimedia yarn sculpture.

Crochet.

One Monday night, I went out to hear an old friend who is a local jazz musician in Pittsburgh. His playing inspired me to make a doll for him; especially since his Monday night sessions would be coming to an end. In my creation, I used wood, cardboard, pipe cleaners, foam (cushion/paper), wire, yarn, pillow stuffing, balloon straws, felt, and craft eyes. This is a pivotal piece in my portfolio, as it has sparked my imagination even further. Someday soon, the Piano Man will have his band, as other musicians are in the works!





## KITTY SPANGLER

### 63 Colorful Bits Cape

42" x 42" x 26"

Wool yarn.

Crochet.

I began making several dozen free-form crochet shapes and eventually united them in a sea of dark gray heather. It was like working a puzzle, manipulating parts to fit—physically, and aesthetically—to make a fun and functional piece.

There is no pattern; I like to create and explore as I go along. It's like additive sculpture: building and fashioning parts while thinking about the big picture. The generous ribbed collar and long bottom fringe help frame the colorful wool shapes while a dark wooden toggle fastens at the neck.

I learned to crochet June 2012 to help Knit the Bridge, in Pittsburgh. Evidently I stuck with it.

And, yes, there are 63 colorful bits in this cape. I like to count things.





## FANNIE WHITE

### **Unconscious Stream**

40.5" x 53"

Cotton materials, thread, cotton batting

Pieced, raw edge applique, paint & ink,  
machine stitch drawn and quilted

*Unconscious Stream* is the result of wanting to build a larger art piece by using small blocks attached together. It is pieced, fused applique and stitching using commercial fabrics. The squares were not planned, hence the title.

# CAROLYN CARSON

## INTO THE MYSTIQUE

I am inspired by the strength of women, as they are the life force of the universe. Quilts are my medium of choice because they exemplify women's work historically. I incorporate yarn that I have spun and then woven, also representative of women's work. I utilize these traditional techniques in a contemporary way in order to draw attention to the lives of women in the modern world. On a more personal level, my work gives me a sense of continuity with other women – historically and globally.

My technique reflects women's work and my subject matter often deals with issues that pertain to women. Using abstract female imagery, or life and fertility symbols such as circles and spirals, I urge the viewer to relate in his/her own personal way without focusing on particular issues. Personally I am very distressed by the global oppression of women that is unseen, unheard, and unreported. My hope is that my work will at the very least cause the viewer to reflect on these silenced voices and other women's issues. Believing in the strength of women over time and space, I am trying to promote and underscore the empowerment of women.

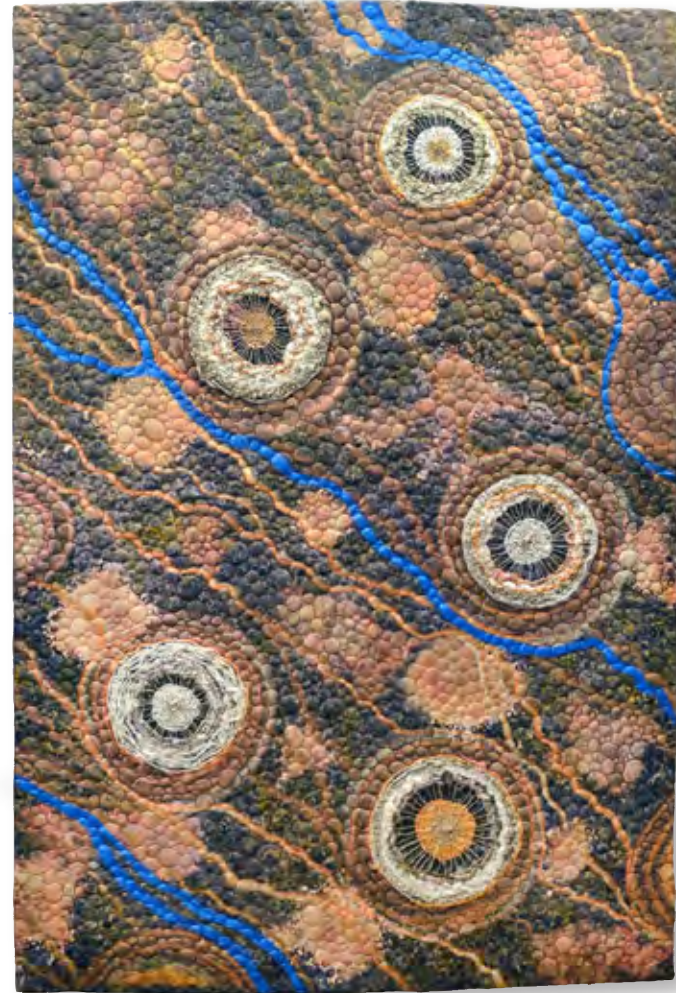
This particular collection is a series utilizing woven circles. I begin each work by selecting whole cloth commercial cotton batik fabric that speaks to me in some way. Sometimes I discharge part of the fabric. Meditating on the batik, I plan yarn that I will incorporate into the piece, starting with raw fleece that I wash and comb. Then I combine it with other dyed wool and silk which I spin into yarn. I weave that yarn on a circle loom. Those circles are then needle felted onto the cotton batik to hold them temporarily in place. After machine quilting the entire piece, the quilt becomes my canvas to paint.





**The Farewell**

61" x 43"



**Essence**

63" x 43"





**Juno's Girls**

68" x 42"



**Water of Life**

69" x 42"





**Legacy of the Matriarchs**

69" x 43"



**The Dance**

68" x 42"



**Me and Judy Brown**

68" x 42"

## ABOUT CAROLYN CARSON

Two themes run through Carolyn Carson's life: the love of textiles and the history of women. As a young mother, she rekindled a childhood interest in sewing and learned to quilt, frequently coloring outside the lines to design her own patterns. As one quilt block leads to another, this new passion sparked a deep interest in the lives of early American quilters, which in turn led to graduate school. Carson received her Ph.D. in History and Policy from Carnegie Mellon University in 1995 and began her academic career at the University of Pittsburgh where she continues to teach Urban Studies. Once settled into that role, Carson felt compelled to work with fiber once again, embarking on a journey of exploration and discovery that has absorbed her since 2004.

Carson's fiber career includes many juried exhibitions and commissions: *Art Quilts Lowell*, Brush Art Galleries and Studios; *Quilts=Art=Quilts*, Schweinfurth Memorial Art Center; *Art on the Walls*, Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council; *2008 Biennial*, Westmoreland Museum of American Art; numerous Fiberarts Guild of Pittsburgh member shows; home of the president, Indiana University of Pennsylvania; Butler Memorial Hospital, Butler, PA; Beth Israel Center, Pittsburgh. Her work has been included in *The Studio Quilt #6*, *State of the Art*, and *1000 Quilt Inspirations: Colorful and Creative Designs for Traditional, Modern, and Art Quilts*.

*Into the Mystique* is Carson's first solo exhibition.

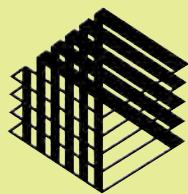
Materials: cotton batik, wool and other fibers hand spun by the artist, oil paint.

Techniques include: discharging, machine quilting, hand spinning, weaving, painting.



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Catalog Editor: Jay van Wagenen  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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