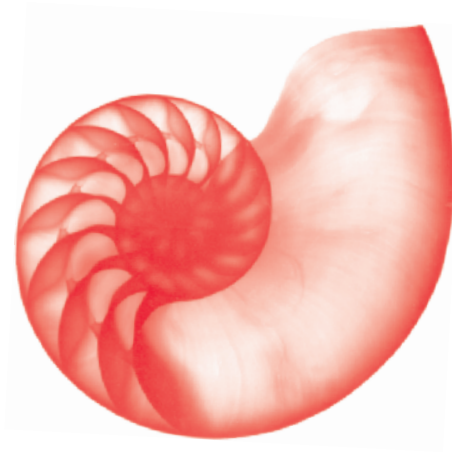




FIBERARTS
GUILD OF
PITTSBURGH
MEMBERSHIP
EXHIBITION

AWAKENING



The Artsmiths of Pittsburgh Gallery

MT. LEBANON • PENNSYLVANIA • 2017

— JUROR'S STATEMENT —

MARGERY AMDUR

I would like to thank the Fiberarts Guild of Pittsburgh for inviting me to participate as Juror for their 2017 members exhibition. Congratulations to the artists whose work I selected, yet I also applaud all the artists who entered and hope that they will continue to take opportunities to enter exhibitions.

I am an artist first and I have never been attached to any one material or way of working; however, my work has always addressed concerns related to handwork, issues of beauty, and the domestic realm where fibers are the currency and language of life dating back to the Fates of Greek mythology. With this in mind it is somewhat ironic that fiber artists have been historically relegated to a category outside of what has been called "High Art." Today's artists working with fiber materials are effectively changing this by blurring and expanding the definition of fiber arts, making work that is more fluid and expansive. The techniques of fiber art have traditionally been acknowledged as craft, leading to the mistaken belief that fiber artists are not as rigorous in their thinking about content and that their focus is purely on technique. This may have been true in the past, but today I can attest that artists who work with textile "oriented" materials, as in my current work, also consider materials, processes, context, and usage as content.

What makes a work of art compelling?

We look at art for its meaning, including its relationship to when it was produced and its lineage, purpose, style, content, and any other qualities that a work embraces. Because materials carry meaning, we must ask why some artists work with materials that are traditional and others with materials that are more directly related to the times in which we live. At some point, we each need to acknowledge what materials and processes resonate with our sense of self, what we most enjoy, and what challenges us. My goal in jurying was to select work that was diverse in nature, where materials and content were in dialogue, and work that I believe when I see first hand would receive a visceral response. When jurying from slides on a computer screen, visceral response to materials can only be imagined.

In an age when the art of social practice is acknowledged as one of the most relevant art forms, I too desire that my work communicate with larger more diverse audiences and many times include performative and community components. Still, I remain interested in art's formal aspects, its visual power, and the materials used to create the work. In this exhibition, I selected works that err on the side of tradition, yet nod to contemporary concerns through narration, progressive working processes, incorporation of "new" materials, and uncommon locations for display.

Ultimately, we live in a world where pluralism reigns and the boundaries of what were once considered as categories of art and craft no longer carry significant weight, as evidenced by the fact that I was asked to jury this annual exhibition. In the recent exhibition at the ICA in Boston, Janelle Porter wrote in the book *Fiber Sculpture 1960-Present* that beginning in the 1980s, "contemporary artists have implicitly received the grand permission to create fiber-based

work with a post fiber sensibility." Here, she confirms the newness of our freedom from tradition as fiber artists. In the 1960's artist Donald Judd said that "movements no longer work. Also linear history has somewhat unraveled." I agree with his observation and with his apt use of fiber as analogy to describe a more open playing field for artists in terms of both materials and content.

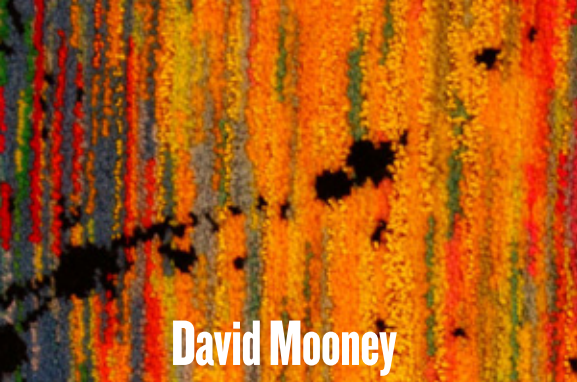
The Fiberarts Guild of Pittsburgh has expanded in recent years, and its members are increasingly diverse as are the materials and approaches to the work. It was an honor to be asked to jury this exhibition. In an interview just the other day, I was reminded that an aunt of mine, Ruth Linton, influenced me to become an artist. She was a weaver and a member of the Fiberarts Guild. She and her son, Harold Linton, extremely accomplished painter, were the "quiet artistic rebels" from my family, a family who for several generations had been born and raised not many streets from the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts. Both as a woman and as a fiber artist, Ruth's strength and persistence resonated. She worked on her loom until she couldn't any longer. Consequently, my respect for the Guild and its members is longstanding and heartfelt. Thank you for inviting me to serve as juror for your annual exhibition.

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Originally from Pittsburgh, Margery Amdur received her B.F.A. from Carnegie-Mellon University and her M.F.A. from the University of Wisconsin in Madison. Margery has had over 60 solo and two-person exhibitions. Her international exhibitions include Turkey, Hungary, Poland, England, and Iceland.

She has been reviewed in national and international publications including *Sculpture Magazine*, *New American Paintings*, *Fiber Arts*, *New Art Examiner*, *Art Papers*, and two of the Manifest International Publications. Her work was on the cover and featured in the fall 2014 issue of *Art Voices*. She was shortlisted in the 2015 International Aesthetica Art Prize, and included in the publication *Future Now*. A personal interview with the artist can be found on the Aesthetica site.

For over twenty years, Margery has been actively creating permanent and temporary installations. In 2012, she completed a permanent installation, *Walking on Sunshine*, 4,000 square feet of flooring and platforms in the Spring Garden subway station, Philadelphia PA. In the fall of 2015, Margery completed a 20' x 10' installation, *My Nature*, at the Philadelphia International Airport, and completed a site-specific installation at Central European University, Budapest, Hungary, where for six weeks she was in residence as a guest artist. In 2016, *Amass #6* was part of the International Exhibition. The US Embassy sent her to Riga, Latvia to install work in the US Ambassador's residence and to give a hands-on workshop to local residents. In March of 2017, Margery will install *Amass #17*, an 8' x 10' wall construction, in the US Embassy's permanent collection in Paramaribo, Suriname. She currently has work on display at the Painting Center in New York City.

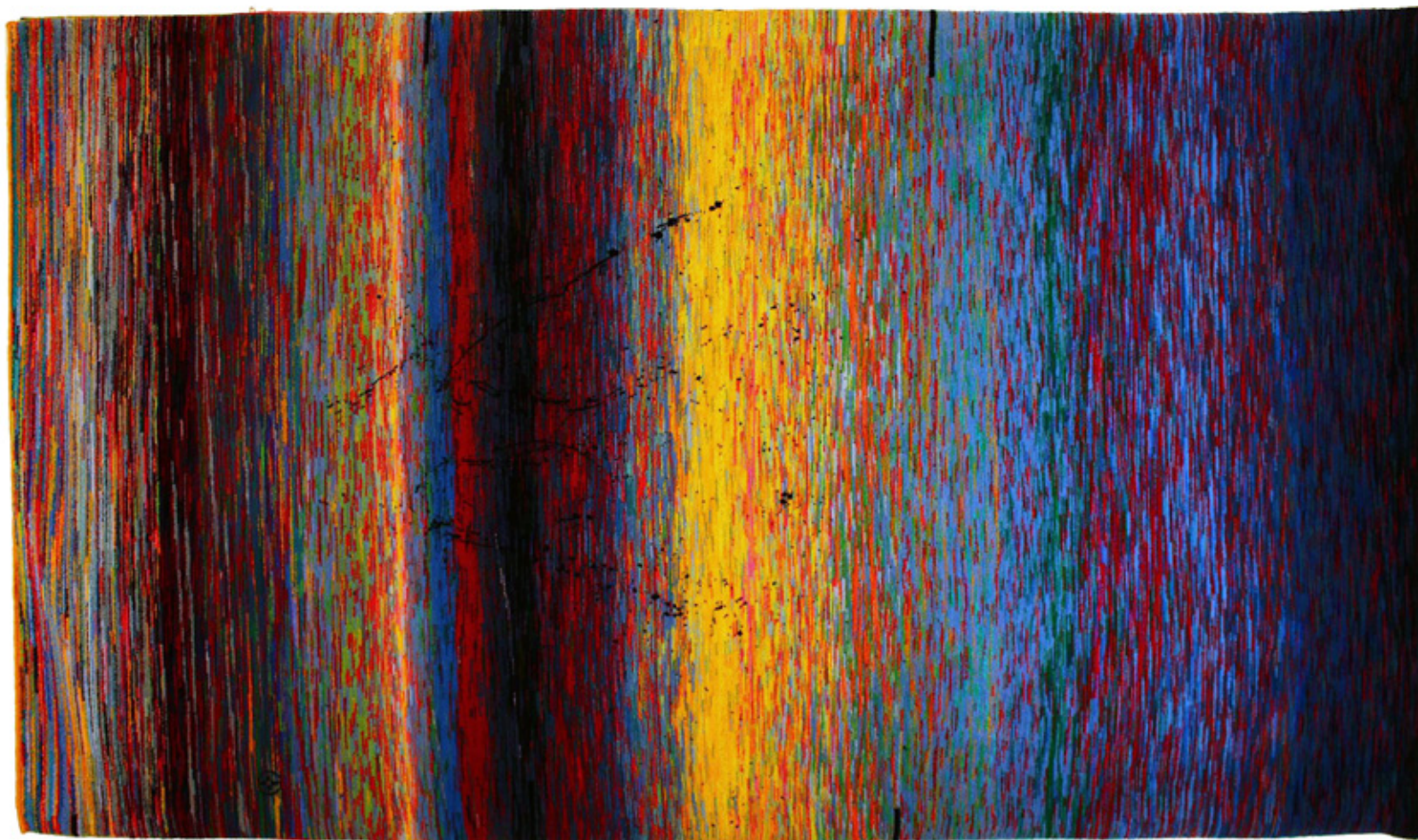


David Mooney

Lifework

59"x 102"x 2"
wool, synthetics, cotton warp;
pile weave

Lifework evolved from discussions in the 1970s on the question of process versus product. We posited a loom with an infinite warp. Switching to work in sound in 1988 was an opportunity to follow up on these discussions. I dressed the loom with no definite plan using scrap yarn accumulated over 15 years of weaving to complete this work. Seven family members died over the 26 years that the piece was on the loom. Memorial markers appear along the top and bottom edges. Adding the markers led to the conception of the piece as a lifework; the process of life.





Rae Gold

Towers

14" x 10" x 10"

Finn wool and beads; wet felted
complex form and beading

Felt is a unique medium to work with. If you can imagine taking the lint from your dryer, in this case I am working with wool, adding hot soapy water to it, and rubbing it together with your hands to create an object which can stand on its own. There is nothing more exciting to me than making this happen. The shapes I have been doing lately are complex in structure creating challenges that I like exploring in this medium.



Fannie White

From the Ashes

47.5" x 38"

commercial cottons, cotton batting,
netting, lace and crayon; piecing,
applique (hand, machine, raw edge),
thread drawing, coloring

My inspiration often comes from a combination of words, phrases and imagery. In this case, the Nightly News pictures of all the recent forest fires and the word 'Awakening.' A picture/idea begins to form in my head. I start to piece together a background, and from there the idea blooms into an art quilt. In my work, I use a variety of materials and techniques—whatever is needed to complete the piece.





Hope Gelfand Alcorn

Lean into the Curve

36" x 23.75"

liquid acrylic on industrial wool; negative transfer process, self-cut stencils, painted

'Joyful Noise' is the key mantra throughout all of my works. Focusing down to the root of all art, I use color and movement to shape, inspire, and excite the mind. My works have no meaning except for expressing the animation of being. White Noise lulls us in to calmness and rest; Joyful Noise is the sound of stimulation and awakening.



Michelle Browne

Thicket: Lost Place

39" x 27"

quilt batting, silk organza, dyed wool roving, etching ink, lutradur, embroidery floss; paper matrix lithography, needle felting, embroidery

From a 'lost' place, a place of entwined branches, vine and weeds, a place maybe once a garden on a hillside by a lake, I draw inspiration.





Michelle Browne

Floradora before Dawn

28" x 32"

quilt batting, black silk organza, dyed
wool roving, etching ink; paper matrix
lithography, needle felting, hand cut



Kristin Karsh

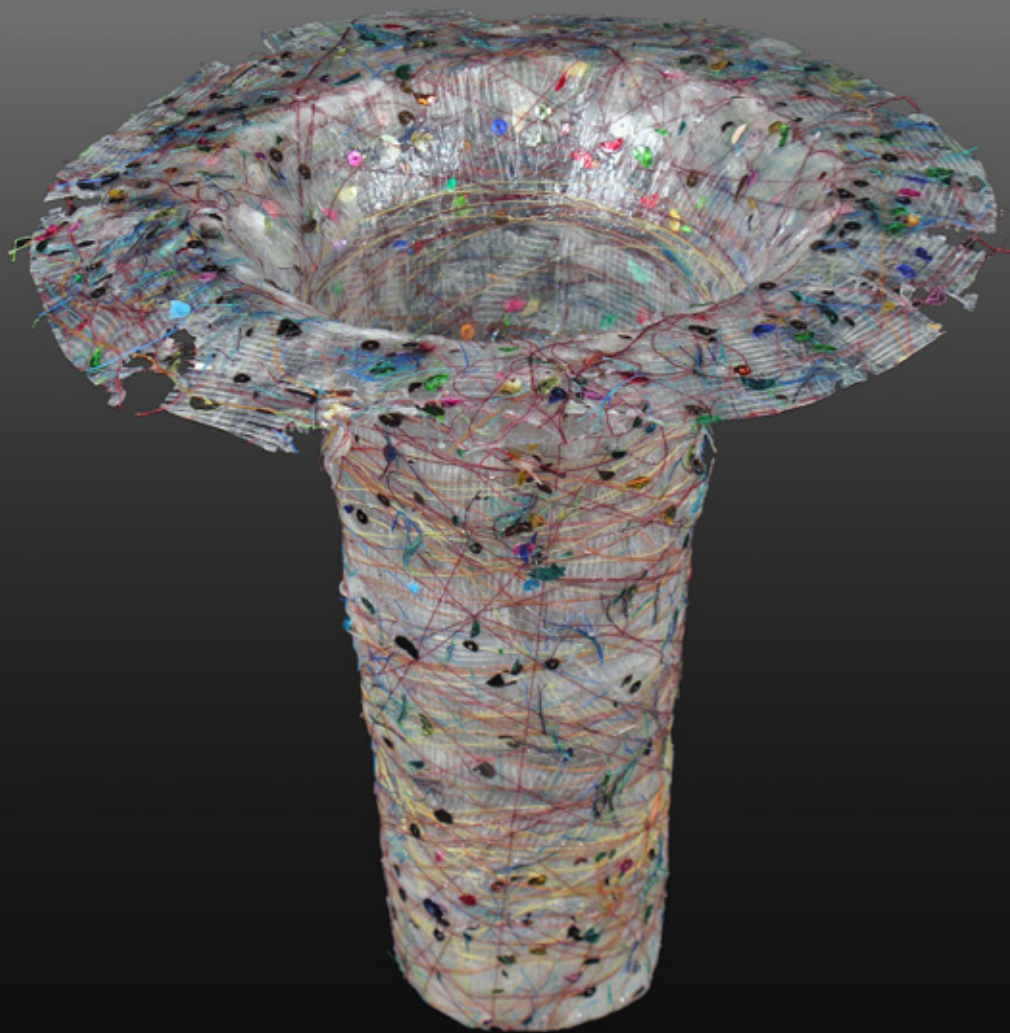
House Fence Boat

15" x 12" x 2"

terry cloth, thread, paperboard, mesh produce bag, found objects; assemblage, machine stitching, decoupage

I'm invigorated by the prospect of transforming discarded objects into works that are both interesting and attractive. Making something from nothing awakens my creativity. In *House Fence Boat* I upcycled items gathered from my household and a collection of foraged objects to create this piece that speaks of place, safety and community. Machine sewing embellishes the paperboard surface that I like to use because it is reminiscent of woven rag rugs. I'm attracted to the random variations in the colors, patterns and text that remain visible on the surface.





Jane Ogren

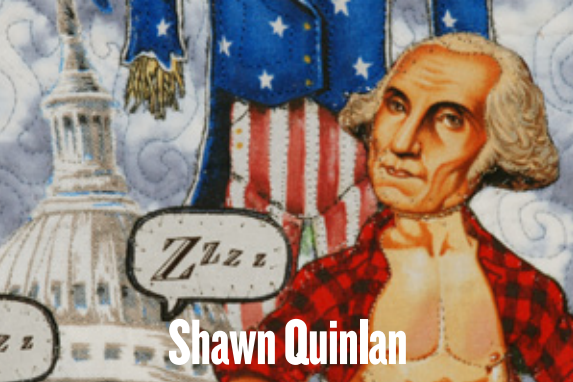
JEFO 644

12" x 12" x 12"

woven glass filaments, threads, fractured
sequins; formed, stiffened, embellished

I have been working with contemporary fiber in two and three-dimensions for many years as a professional artist. I have a high regard for craftsmanship and a passion for color and texture.

I enjoy the evolution of my artwork as I problem solve through the entire process. Remembering where I have been artistically and then looking forward to exploring new ideas keeps my artwork ever evolving. For *Awakening* I chose to make a vessel with extruded glass fibers.



Shawn Quinlan

The New American Heritage

61" x 53"

altered fabric wall hanging, vintage tea towel, commercial fabrics; pieced, applique, machine quilted

I confront images associated with news, media, and popular culture, which I appropriate to construct highly political quilted art works. The content, as in many of my quilts, is loosely based on subjects such as hypocrisy, corruption, self-righteousness, and contradiction; and how these characteristics so often hide behind religion, propaganda, and the like.





Shawn Quinlan

Bedtime Story

37" x 53"
altered wall hanging,
commercial fabrics; pieced,
applique, machine quilted





Sheila Golding

The Spring of the Single Mother

12" x 12" x 5"

wooden drawer, found objects, paper, threads,
feathers, shells, driftwood; assemblage

My journey as an artist has guided me to create intuitively, casting a new light on the treasures I find on the ground, in thrift shops, and generally in other peoples cast-offs. Assemblage has enabled me to give new life to these random objects, unifying them into a story that involves the viewer in a unique visual context. This medium has enabled me to find a new artistic voice and expand my imagination.





Jill Valenzuela

Tricorn

8" x 10.5" x 6"

wool, embroidery thread, beads;
3D hand felting, hand embroidery, beading

I am a maker. I make what moves me. And what moves me is my love for fiber (all kinds), weaving, embroidery, stitching, sewing and metalsmithing. I practice Wabi Sabi—finding the beauty in the imperfections. I love the imperfections and textures in nature. I work on bringing all my loves together in the pieces I create. By combining all my loves, I bring together textures and mediums to play together harmoniously. All the different mediums have such different feels but work cohesively in my work. My love for imperfections and for making the hard look soft and the soft look hard is what I work on achieving in my work.



Cynthia Martinez

Reborn

22" x 22" x 20"

re-purposed jute on cotton warp, stiffening agent, enamel paint, re-purposed base; woven, stiffened, formed, painted

I like to push the boundaries of methods and materials to expand self-expression through my art, lending depth and dimension to traditional artistic techniques. Made from repurposed and recycled materials, *Reborn* is my three-dimensional portrayal of the lifecycle for all things. A never-ending rebirth of new design, purpose, strength and energy, emerging as a gentle cradle of life. A fragile balance, depicted in a delicate structure of woven fibers.





Sylvia Leo

Secret Place

17.5" x 13.5"

cottons; machine-pieced, machine-
quilted, machine-appliqued

My hangings seem to happen...

I begin, react, add on, change
(sometimes cutting the whole piece
into small pieces), rebuild, rearrange,
rip out, etc., until I find something
that feels deeply meaningful to me.

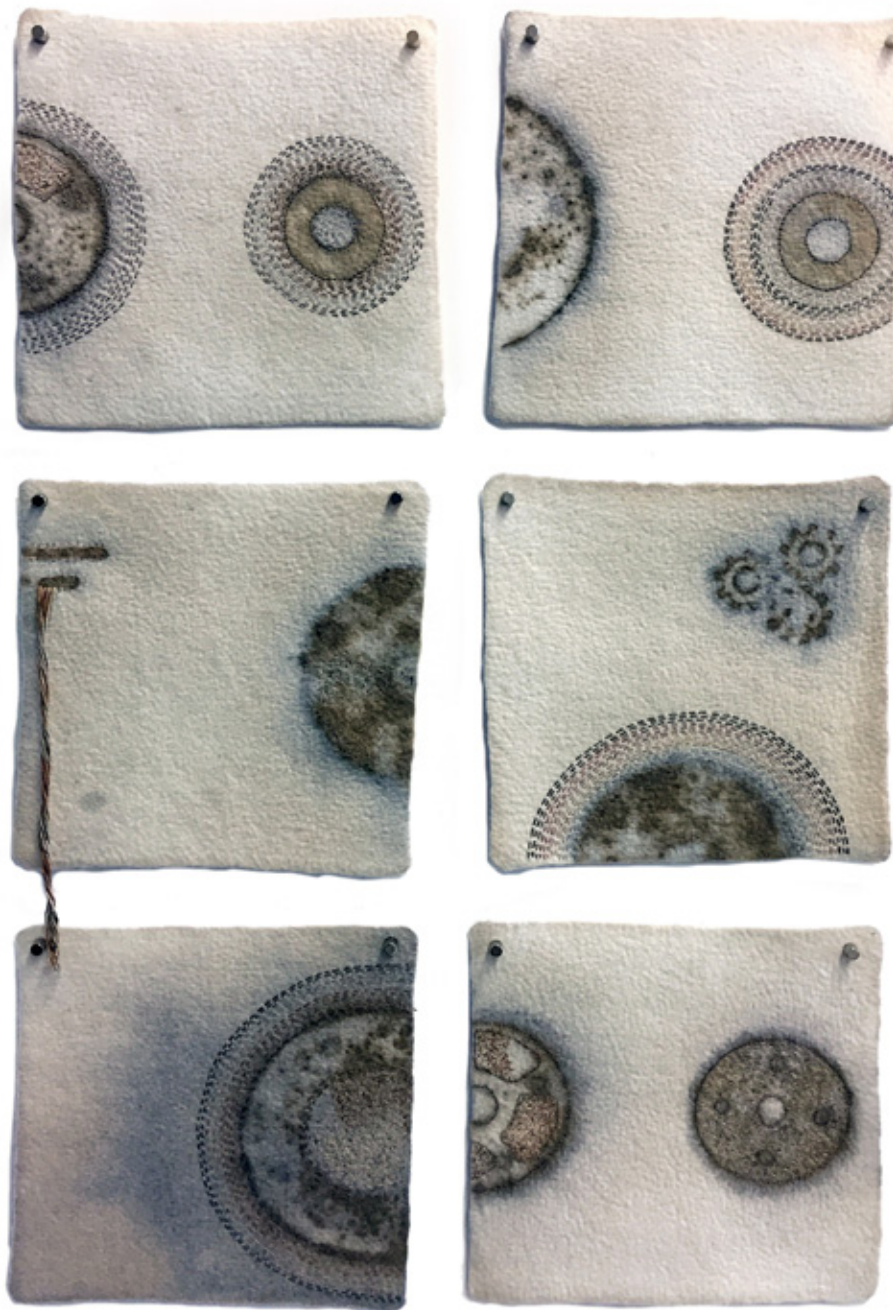


Eva Camacho-Sanchez

Rust Away

7.5" x 7.5" each tile
26" x 16.5" overall
merino wool, cotton and linen thread;
felting, stitching, rust dyeing

Rust gradually corrodes metal objects, leaving a permanent, unforgettable print. These six pieces were wet felted and textured with thousands of stitches using rust-dyed cotton and linen thread. As a natural dyer, the golden color of rust has always meant much more to me than any other color in the spectrum. It wasn't an easy color to achieve until I started to experiment with a few pieces of rusted metal that I found on the street. This then led me to a creative journey in different mediums like silk, wool, cotton, and paper.



As a storyteller, my goal is to create thought provoking narratives to develop a visual dialogue with the viewer. In 1830, amid controversy and opposition, President Andrew Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act, forcibly removing thousands of Native Americans to reservations west of the Mississippi River. Jackson's goal was to "separate the Indians from immediate contact with settlements of whites" claiming, "the policy of the Government toward the red man is not only liberal, but generous." This compelling story is a dark, yet essential part of our diverse American fabric, which hopefully will touch the viewers, compelling them to linger, just a moment longer.

(Original images courtesy Library of Congress)

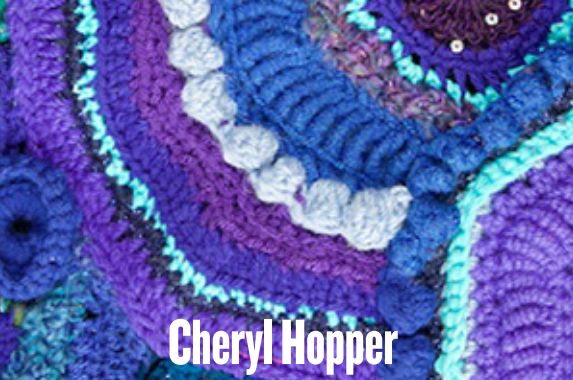
60" X 100"
 Procion dyes, cotton fabric,
 textile ink; image transfer,
 hand silkscreened, hand
 dyed fabrics, machine
 pieced and quilted



Patricia Kennedy-Zafred

The Home of the Brave





Cheryl Hopper

My Awakening

68" x 53" x 2"

yarn (wool, acrylic, cotton), beads;
freeform crochet

After a forty year hiatus, I had so many ideas and dreams percolating inside of me. Coming back to art and finding freeform crochet set me in a direction I had not envisioned. *My Awakening* is a comparison of my inner turmoil to that of the ocean. So much is going on below the surface. So many beautiful ideas coming forth and rising to be captured and expressed through my art. This is my first major art piece upon my return and it is an expression of joy and anticipation.





Angela Pasquale

Sunbow

23"x 22"x 1"
linen, embroidery floss; hand stitched

This sunbow appeared one day, inspiring me to add it to a piece I had started, made up of colorful celestial bodies. The colors depict the warmth and brightness that emanated from the various objects. An arch materialized on the ground and I added that. I thought the prism-like colors of the arch enhanced the various stars, planets and moons in the background. Finished off with fringes like comet tails, the work on this tapestry can be appreciated from the back as well. Over time, this piece has gone through many design changes, and now I feel it's complete.



Brent Ruka

Selfie

36.5" x 27.5"

cotton fabric, colored pencils; collage

In an art museum in Paris, while most people (myself included) were snapping photos of masterpieces, three friends were taking pictures of themselves. As I watched from across the room, I couldn't resist making them the subject of my next shot. From that image, I drew inspiration for this work.

During the long process of fusing together countless tiny, carefully cut pieces of fabric, I wondered about these young women and could only guess the details of their lives. But their *joie de vivre* was infectious. My goal was to capture the joy and share it.





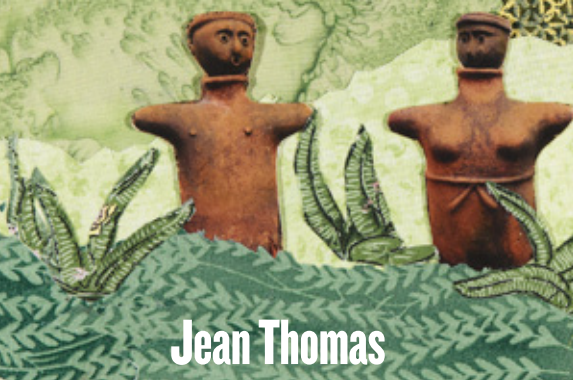
Ellen Smith

Julian's Neighborhood

26" x 29.25"

original photographs, commercial fabrics, threads, fabric markers, acrylic paints; layered, stitched, painted, fused, embellished, raw-edge applique

This piece was inspired by my grandson, Julian, now three, and his awakening to the neighborhood we share. One of his first words was 'outside,' and so we would walk: to the old man's house on Celeron Street with statuary animals, to the park, the baseball field, Mimi and Puppup's house to visit Alice the chicken, the ice cream store or to the bus stop to catch a 61 A or B for a magical ride downtown. With each walk Julian's awareness grew and I was allowed to experience this familiar territory through his delighted toddler eyes.



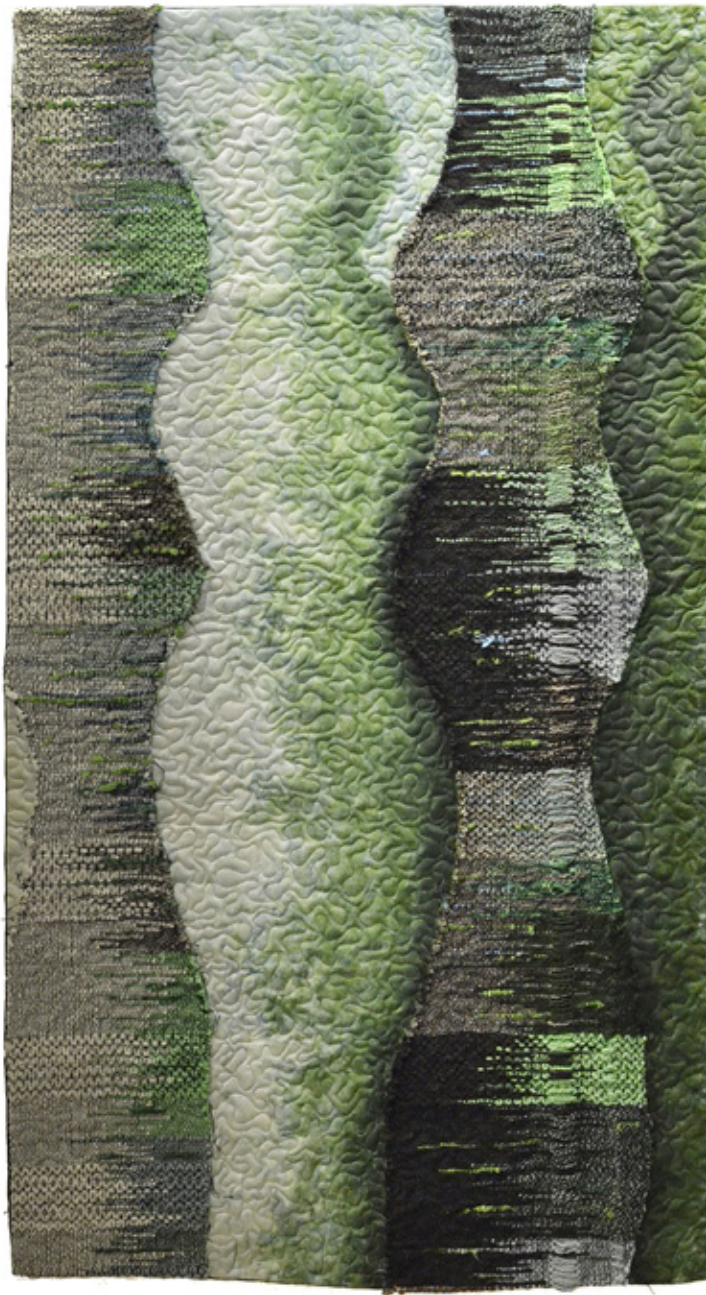
Jean Thomas

My Virtual Backyard

26.25" x 48.25"
cotton fabric, batting, webbing, fiber
adhesive; fusing, photo transfer,
hand and machine stitching

I wanted to make an image of my yard during
summer that will warm my heart when I look
out my kitchen window on a cold winter day.





Carolyn Carson

Equinox

61" x 33"

whole cloth cotton batik, wool and silk
spun and woven by the artist, paint;
machine quilted, hand woven, painted

Equinox refers metaphorically to a balance between light and darkness. As a life-long feminist I am grateful to be living in a country where women do not suffer the oppression that women in many cultures still must endure. Why do we ignore the plights of so many women in other parts of the world suffering under the darkness of real tyranny? Fiber is my medium of choice.

Its raw nature, and the traditional practices associated with fiber that have generally been rendered by women since ancient times give me a sense of continuity with other women historically and globally.



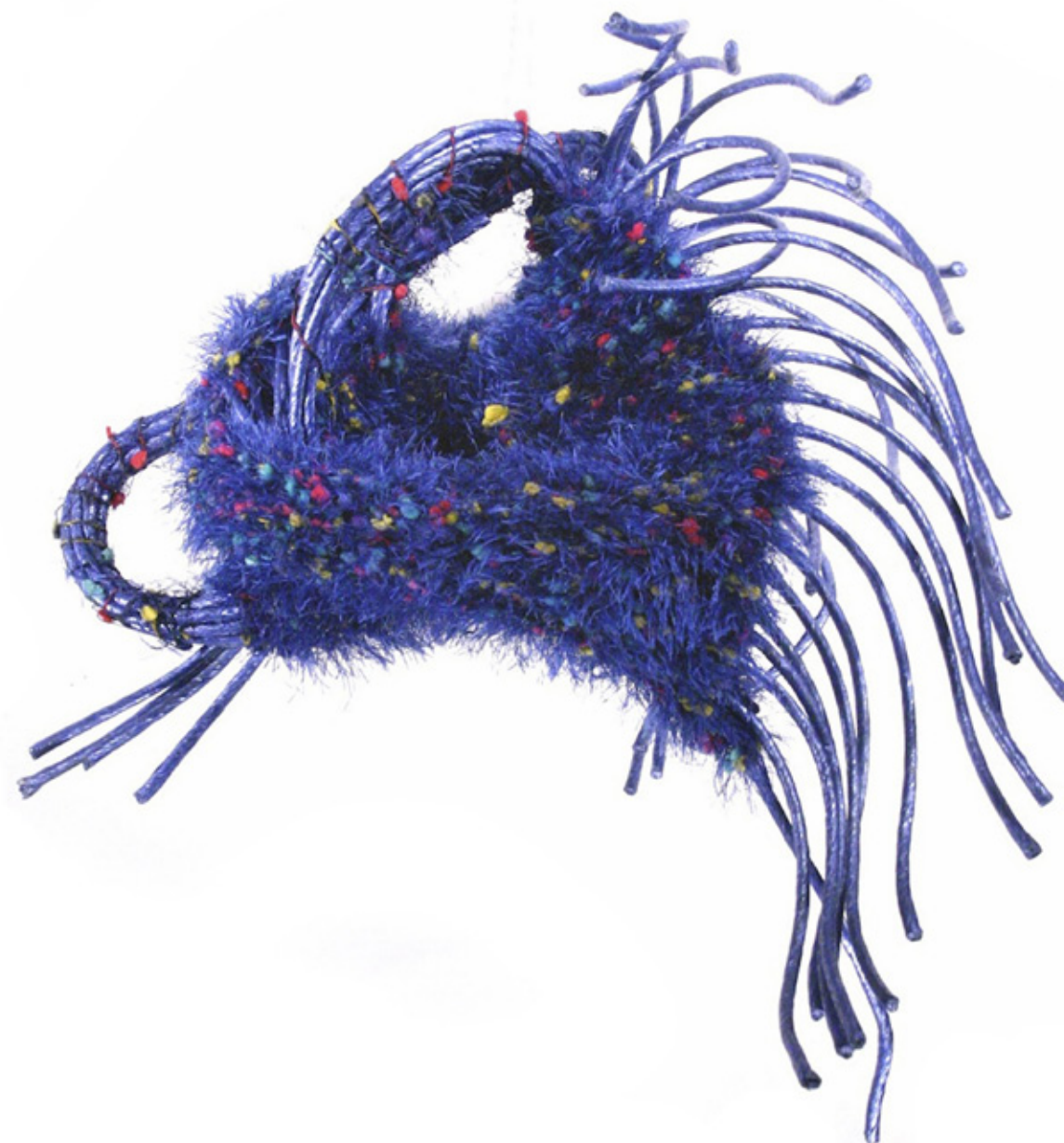
Passle Helminski

Waiting

18" x 21" x 14"
painted rushing and yarn;
tubular knit

Waiting is the 3-D image of my
feeling world right before they
blow the horn to start my 5K races.





Passle Helminski

Bad Hair Day

23" x 21" x 23"
painted rushing and yarn;
tubular knit

Bad Hair Day happens to me too often. I and my service dog train for 5Ks. We live and train in a wooded area that opens into fields. We come home covered in bits and pieces of colorful petals, leaves and twigs in our hair. One day while trying to comb out our hair I was inspired to do art. Enjoy my bad hair day.

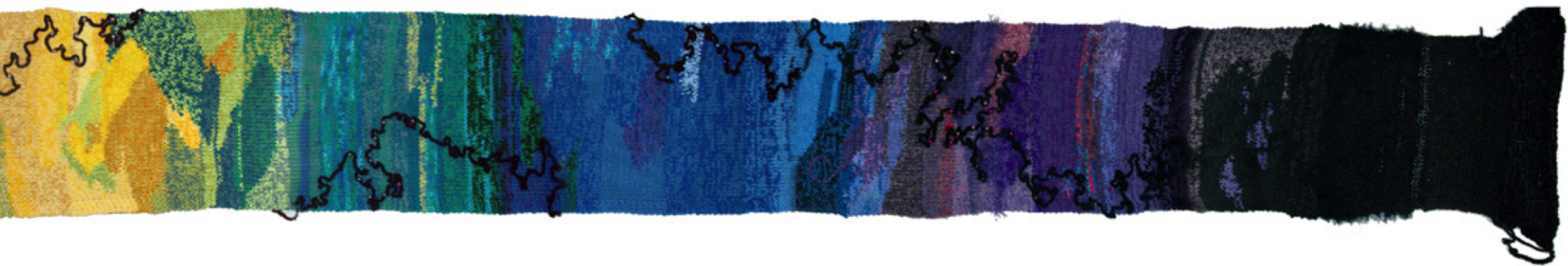


Judy Manion

Journey

21" x 288"
mixed fiber yarns, beads, plastic mesh;
hand knit, crochet, stitching





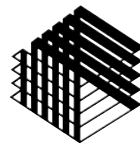
Journey is about taking what's on your shelf—your fiber shelf, your emotional energy self, your time-in-life shelf—and moving forward. It's a trail of stitches that took its own path in the colors and curls of my mind and hands. It told me where it wanted to go. It didn't want to end but it had to.

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