

LAYERED VOICES

DOCENT INFORMATION

Overview

Layered Voices is an exhibition of 23 art quilts created by members of Studio Art Quilt Associates (SAQA), a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote the art quilt through education, exhibitions, professional development, documentation, and publications. Founded in 1989 by an initial group of 50 artists, SAQA now has over 3,000 members worldwide: artists, teachers, collectors, gallery owners, museum curators and corporate sponsors. Since its establishment, the organization has grown alongside the evolution of the quilt as an art form. Today, SAQA defines an art quilt as a creative visual work that is layered and stitched or that references this form of stitched layered structure.

Layers are everywhere. They become apparent when we plumb the earth's surface, make archeological digs to discover the history of civilizations, explore human anatomy, dress for the weather, dig in freshly fallen snow, and count rings in the stump of a tree. Layers are abstract, too. We find them in language when we ponder the hidden meanings in novels, poems, conversations, and puns. And of course, layers are integral to the definition of an art quilt.

Textile artists achieve layering many ways in their artwork. Multi-hued fabrics frequently begin the layering process. The character of the layers can be changed by selecting sheer, opaque, reflective, tinted or toned fabric. Enhancement of the layers can be achieved with paints, dyes, bleaching, distressing, embellishments, and stitching. These are the tools at the artist's disposal to create layers of light, shade, depth, and color.

Entrants were encouraged to interpret the use and concept of layering in their work. The layering of the media may be literal, inferred, or even digital. Realistic, representational, wearable art, and abstract work were considered for this exhibit.

The Art and Artists



Blue Burn

40" x 73"

Joanne Alberda

Iowa, USA



Tales from a Shingled Roof

49" x 47"

Joanne Alberda

Iowa, USA

Joanne Alberda lived and worked in Iowa for most of her life. She taught in the Art Department of Dordt College for more than 30 years. Although she has worked in a variety of mediums, she has moved almost exclusively to abstract collaged and stitched fabric work for the wall in the last ten years. Alberda is also an avid photographer. Her favorite subjects, the prairie landscape, the play of light on form, or the weathered surfaces and textures of old buildings or trees. Her fabric pieces are often inspired by the subject matter of her photography, and she usually exhibits her photographs with her fiber works, allowing for dialogue between the two mediums.



Core Sample

48" x 64"

Regina Benson

Golden, Colorado, USA

www.reginabenson.com

As a full-time studio artist in Golden, Colorado, Regina V. Benson has been exploring ways to harness the fluid nature of textiles to hang and stand freely in space and undulate against walls while still retaining its tactile nature. In designing her sculptural art quilts, Benson relies on her extensive inventory of drawing and painting skills, textile surface design techniques, and more recently learned engineering and architectural principles. She marries the process of art making with her vision at the inception of each work – believing that in her consequent creation the viewer and she enjoy a more complete experience.

Regina Benson's art quilts are shown internationally; her work has received the Award of Excellence at Quilt National, a juror's award for innovation at the Textile Triennial in Lodz, Poland and been featured at shows such as SOFA in Chicago, and Art Basel in Miami.



Quite Quiet

53" x 40"

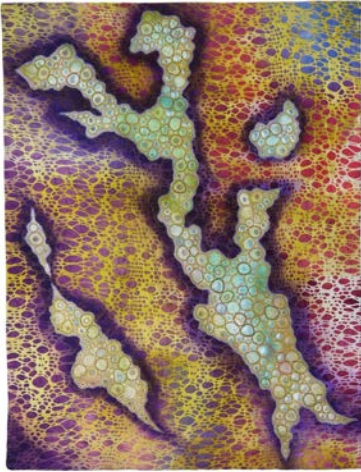
Peggy Brown

Indiana, USA

www.peggybrownart.com

Peggy Brown has painted “watercolor on paper” for 40 plus years. Twelve years ago, Brown added a new obsession to the mix, “painting on fabric.” Her art quilts have been accepted in many art quilt juried exhibits including Quilt National, Visions, Elements, six SAQA exhibits, IQA World of Beauty, and AQS Paducah. Often her work wins an award. Six books, many magazines, and web-vines have featured her work. The latest art piece is featured in Martha Sielman’s “Abstracts and Geometrics.”

Peggy Brown is a JAM SAQA member. Brown and her husband, Jim live on fifty-seven acres of hardwood forest in Southwest Indiana. Their three sons and their families live from Virginia to California with Colorado in between. They visit lots of interesting places.



Multicellular

67" x 50"

Betty Busby

Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA

www.bbusbyarts.com

After graduating from the Rhode Island School of Design with a ceramics major, Betty Busby founded a custom ceramic tile-manufacturing firm in Los Angeles, CA. After nearly 20 years of running the firm, she sold the business in 1994 (it is still in operation to this day).

Upon relocating to New Mexico, Busby changed the focus of her artwork to fiber, taking it full time in 2004. Her manufacturing background has led to constant experimentation with new materials and techniques that fuel her work.

The classic fractal structures of the sub microscopic world are a constant inspiration, as are natural processes, such as oxidation, replication and growth.



In Other Words

37" x 37"

Jette Clover

Antwerp, Belgium

www.jetteclover.com

Jette Clover was born and raised in Copenhagen, Denmark, but she has lived and worked for many years in USA and the Netherlands. Since 2005, she has been living in Antwerp, Belgium.

Clover's formal education is in journalism and art history. She has worked on a daily newspaper in Copenhagen, had an art gallery in Los Angeles, CA, and later, was curator at the Dutch Textile Museum for more than 10 years, where she organized the very first European Art Quilt exhibition in 1997. Since 1998 she has worked full time as a studio artist. She has exhibited widely in USA, Europe and Asia, and she is a sought after teacher for workshops in surface design.

Clover has been a member of the European group Quilt Art since 2000, and since 1998, she has been a member of SAQA and served for three years as the international representative.



Defiant
70" x 72"
Linda Colsh
Maryland, USA

The Art of Linda Colsh examines humanist themes, with special focus on aspects of growing old. Returning to Maryland after many years in Europe and Asia, Colsh explores connections between natural spaces and populated, constructed places in her new series. Her imagery and minimal palette is known internationally through exhibitions and in public, private and corporate collections. Among Colsh's honors are the European Quilt Triennial first prize and Nihon Vogue's Quilts Japan Prize. She has curated, juried, and judged major international exhibitions. She is currently a member of the Advisory Board of the International Quilt Study Center & Museum and previously served as Board member and Secretary of Studio Art Quilt Associates.



X Marks the Spot
54" x 37"
Fenella Davies
Bath, England
United Kingdom

Fenella Davies lives and works in Bath, England – a world heritage Georgian city, and her love of history and past lives has an influence in her work. With diplomas in embroidery as well as quilt making, she has been making and exhibiting work for many years.

She exhibited with Bath Textile Artists for 10 years, before being accepted into the European group - QuiltArt in 2000. Her award-winning work has been featured in many books, exhibitions and collections. Her pieces touch on past histories and the lives and marks of those who have gone before. It is multilayered, and collaged, leaving much to the imagination of the viewer.



The Profound

40" x 63"

Chiaki Dosho

Japan

chiakidoshoart.com

chiakidoshoart@mac.com

Chiaki Dosho majored in Japanese literature in the university. After the university, Dosho studied fashion, followed by quilting. She found that quilting was very profound and interesting. She made traditional quilts at first, and made her first original art quilt two years later. Ten years later, she studied textile in Art University. Dosho has been making quilts for 28 years, now.

Her work is very unique. It is fiber art, thus, Dosho calls her work "fiber art quilts". She uses a lot of original techniques. First, She cuts cloth into small pieces. She sews them on a base/ foundation, one by one. This step covers the quilting aspect of her quilt.

"Light & Dark" is one of her original techniques. It is part of and shares its name with her series called "Light & Dark". Her challenge of creating new techniques goes on.



Cobwebs IV
22.5" x 18.5"
Linda Engstrom
Arizona, USA

Always interested in textiles, Linda Engstrom began making quilts in the mid- 1990s after purchasing some Japanese yukata. A **yukata** (浴衣) is a **Japanese** garment, a casual summer **kimono** usually made of cotton or synthetic fabric, and unlined. Feeling the yukata deserved pairing with hand-dyed fabric, Engstrom learned to dye fabric, which led her to explorations with discharge dyeing and other surface design techniques.

Her current additional interests include generating fractal images on the computer and having them digitally printed on fabric. Engstrom also explores the alteration and digital printing of her photographs on fabric to be used in her art quilt creations.



Cross Currents #4
52" x 35"
Dianne Firth
Canberra, Australia

Dianne Firth is a landscape architect and artist living and working in Canberra, Australia's national capital. Most of her ideas are informed by natural systems and a quest for beauty. She likes to create particular moods as well as engage the viewer in other ways of seeing art. This may involve the use of materials such as netting and displaying the work away from the wall while projecting shadows behind the artwork with directional lighting.

Rather than using representational techniques, Firth prefers to use processes of abstraction and minimalism. Line, form and texture are her dominant design elements, and layering and machine stitching are the main techniques. Tactile aspects are always considered. Each piece is designed within a frame - a device to focus the eye into the work.



It's Time

40" x 57"

Gloria Hansen

New Jersey

www.gloriahansen.com

A New Jersey native, Gloria Hansen is considered a pioneer in uniting the quilt maker with the computer. In 1996, she co-authored "The Quilter's Computer Companion", a groundbreaking book published by No Starch Press. She went on to write thirteen titles in the "Free Stuff" on the Internet series published by C&T Publishing. Hansen's book "Digital Essentials", published by Electric Quilt Company, was a USA Book News "Best Books 2009" finalist.

Hansen has been a guest, featured on two TV shows, has award-winning work exhibited throughout the USA and abroad, for well over two decades, and featured in numerous publications. In 2009, she had a solo show at the San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles, in California.

Hansen, also, has art in the permanent collection of the National Quilt Museum in Paducah, Kentucky, The Chandler Museum for the Arts in Chandler, Arizona, and private collections.



Happy Today?
153" x 24"
Leah Higgins
Manchester, England
United Kingdom

Leah Higgins is a textile artist based in Manchester, England. Her art has developed from a life-long love of working with textiles and stitch. Her inspirations are often “man-made,” for example; combining physical structures with social constructs in her “Hidden Message” series or exploring how buildings are abandoned or destroyed in her “Ruins” series.

More recently, Higgins has sought to express complex and conflicting emotions in her work. Her latest body of work, including “Happy Today?” was developed in response to a dark and difficult period in her family life during which she experienced first-hand the calming influence of place on our mental state. Her visually intense, often large-scale abstract pieces explore the interaction of colour applied to textile through multiple layers of printing and other methods of surface design. Higgins develops a cohesive palette of fabrics to cut, piece or collage before layering and finishing with stitch.



Death Shroud for Democracy

99.5" x 46"

Kristin LaFlamme

Portland, Oregon, USA

www.kristinlaflamme.com

Kristin La Flamme was born and raised in Los Angeles, CA; lived in Germany for over a decade; and after short stints in Hawaii and Virginia, has settled permanently in Portland, Oregon with her family.

La Flamme sees herself as an artist who sews. She enjoys traditional quilt piecing by machine and varied hand embroidery embellishments, but is not opposed to using any technique or material if it is appropriate to the message to be conveyed in the artwork. Life as a military spouse with its frequent moves and opportunities to learn about various cultures influence her work both with personal insights and social commentary. La Flamme has had her art quilts shown internationally in group and solo shows, and is a co-author of *“Twelve by Twelve: The International Art Quilt Challenge.”*



Somewhere Between
41" x 39"
Paulette Landers
Oregon, USA
www.paulettelanders.com

Paulette Landers was born in Montreal, Canada. She graduated from California State University, Fullerton with emphasis in Fiber Arts. She enjoys working in the solitude of her studios, both on the coast of Oregon, and in the California Mountains.

Landers' has been making textile artwork since 2002. She refers to her most recent collection as Textile Paintings: A Fusion of Fabric and Paint. Most of her work is in a non-objective and experimental style.

Landers' has won numerous awards, including First Place at the International Quilt Festival, Houston. She has exhibited in the major juried quilt shows in Houston, Paducah, Long Beach, and Road to California. Her work has been shown in the international exhibits at the Visions Art Museum. Her work has appeared in Quilters Newsletter Magazine, IQA Quilt Scene, and SAQA Journal.



Migration. Souvenir.

36" x 51"

Roxanne Lasky

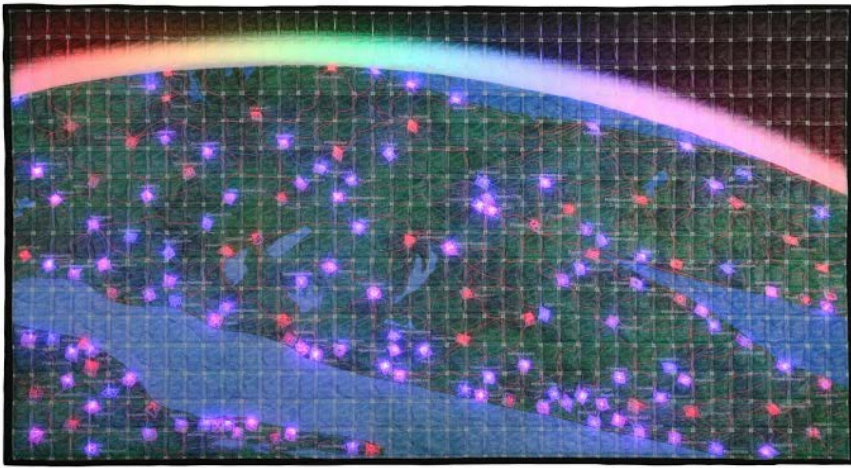
Bluffton, South Carolina, USA

www.roxannelasky.com.

Roxanne Lasky holds a Master of Teaching degree and received the Manhattanville College Award of Excellence for her thesis project: *Quilting: Model and Metaphor*. Her passion is teaching art methods to all learning levels with an emphasis on understanding one's process and developing creativity through meditative exercises and consistent practice.

Lasky is a maker, inspired by the magic in ordinary things. She works with paint, metal, photographs, cloth and words with an affinity to earth-friendly dyeing methods and repurposed objects. These pieces become meaningful as they find their places in two- and three-dimensional compositions. Her work is intuitive in nature as it maps relationships, memory, place and the paradox of truths, therein. Currently, she is exploring personal history through a series of "Body Maps" guided by the idea of physical and emotional migration.

Her watercolors, oil paintings and quilting have won numerous awards. Her work has appeared in a variety of publications and resides in public and private collections. While operating her quilting business, she wrote and published, a stitching primer called "*Design and Stitch: the art of everyday patchwork*" (available on Amazon).



Of Irritability and Salinity

41" x 75"

John Lefelhocz

Ohio, USA

John Lefelhocz is an American conceptual artist primarily known for his works in textile arts, specifically quilts. He attended Ohio University (in Athens, Ohio). Since college, he has owned and operated Cycle Path Bicycle Shop, in Athens, while establishing himself as an artist. His art has gained higher recognition since the late 1990s. This can be attributed to inclusion in several Quilt Nationals. He has subsequently shown his works throughout the US and abroad.

After his education at Ohio University, Lefelhocz experimented in several media including digital illustrations (tessellations), wood assemblages, and found object sculpture. His experimentation with found object sculpture built a foundation for future works that have more emphasis on the conceptual, creating a greater depth of meaning.

In the late 1990s, Lefelhocz steered toward a style with greater priority on the broader use of multimedia art. This style includes, but is not limited to, the use of digital paper prints, painting, needlework, and a refined use of found objects, frequently assembled in bas-relief. These objects create a narrative through the use of metaphor and abstraction.



Letters to Myself- Page 2
34" x 27"
Denise Linet
Brunswick, Maine, USA
www.deniselinet.com

Denise Linet is a mixed media artist currently living in Brunswick, Maine. Although her roots are in quilt making, her recent work is more closely influenced by collage. She combines scanned and altered digital images, painted and screen printed fabric, and paper then assembles them into collage like surfaces which are then embellished with hand and machine stitching. Her award winning artworks have been juried into numerous national and international exhibitions including: Materials Hard and Soft, Quilt National, Visions and The Artist as Quiltmaker.



THIS Revolution Will Not Be Televised #13 Protest Series
94" x 77"
Penny Mateer & Martha Wasik
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Mateer and Wasik, both, live in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Mateer is a full-time studio artist whose primary medium is fiber and Wasik is a printmaker and graphic designer. Highlighting contemporary issues, they draw from the rich tradition of quilting to create a safe space to challenge long held beliefs.

Mateer manipulates, pattern, color and texture while Wasik manipulates images, evaluates layout options, and incorporates text. They work together to find ways to enhance visual impact and inspire conversation. Their recent collaboration has produced award-winning work: *THIS Revolution Will Not Be Televised #13 Protest Series* won Best in Show in Fiberart International 2016.



Premonition

55" x 68"

Dinah Sargeant

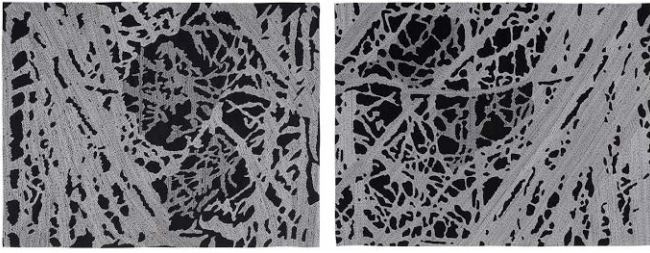
California, USA

www.dinahsargeant.com

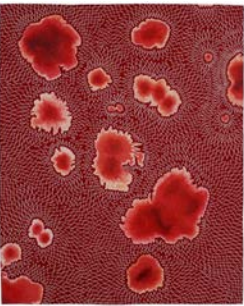
“I paint fabric, then search for narratives within the colors and shapes. Between what I see and what I intuit, a story unfolds. I collage the imagery, then stitch it into quilts and dolls.”

A California native, Dinah Sargeant graduated from California State University, Chico with an M.A. in painting in 1975. Sargeant is an artist who creates story quilts and dolls out of her hand-painted fabrics. She works intuitively in a direct, collage-like manner often using raw edges with machine and hand stitching to create intricate and textured pieces. After graduating she experimented with intaglio printmaking and worked as a graphic artist before merging her painting with textile art. Her work has been included in regional, national and international exhibitions Quilt Visions-American Modern Art in Oulu, Finland and the Quilts 20/20: Traditional Roots, Contemporary Art at the Susquehanna Art Museum, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

John Hopper featured Sargeant in the online issue of the arts magazine Inspirational 9. Most recently her work was included at the Art Quilt Elements 2016 exhibit at the Wayne Art Center, Wayne, Pennsylvania and is currently in the Breakout: Quilt Visions 2016 exhibit at the Visions Art Museum in San Diego, California. Her work was selected for the 2017 Quilt National exhibit in Athens, Ohio next year.



Entanglements
55" x 144"
Barbara Watler



Red Bioluminescence
48" x 39"
Barbara Watler
Florida, USA
www.barbarawatler.com

Watler has spent the last 55 years in the Hollywood, Florida area. She learned to sew on an old treadle machine as a six year old and still enjoys machine sewing. She also uses hand stitching in her artworks and has developed her own stitching patterns and processes.

Nature's compositions are inherently honest and Watler's photographs of trees provide her with an infinite source of inspiration. Even though homage to the beauty of this planet is an important motivation for her art, loving her processes is a big bonus. Her obsessive integration of stitching along with a mind's eye that is graphically oriented to nature's designs, reflect her personal commitment to exuberance.

Entanglements diptych: Having lived in the same area of south Florida for 55 years, Watler still misses the bare winter trees of northern Ohio, where she lived as a child. Editing her tree photographs provides endless spontaneously natural compositions. The complexity of intertwined trunks and branches creates a network of intersections, which outlines shapes that repeat throughout the diptych. These shapes change and evolve in ways that are both new yet ancient. The use of white and gray threads adds a perception of layers to the trees.

Red Bioluminescence: Watler's bioluminescence series has been developed from photo transfers of her dye paintings. In this quilt, the transfers are on the white poly/cotton under layer stitched together in whole cloth reverse appliqué. The hand stitching on the red background creates random zigzag patterns that repeat how bioluminescence looks in process.



Smoke and Ashes: Ruins #1
36" x 36"
Charlotte Ziebarth
Colorado, USA
www.charlotteziebarth.com

Charlotte's award-winning quilts have appeared in many national juried exhibitions including Quilt National '13 and '15, Visions, Art Quilt Elements, Quilt=Art=Quilts, Art Quilts: New Legacies, and Form Not Function. Her quilt appeared as the cover image for the exhibition catalog and book *Quilt Visions 2008: Contemporary Expressions*.

She is the author of *Artistic Photo Quilts*, published in 2009 by C & T Publishing. It is about her development of the digital fabric techniques used in her quilts. She has a background in teaching university level psychology, but has worked in various fiber techniques for many years. After identifying principally as a weaver, she fell in love with digital art possibilities and presently concentrates on creating digital imagery printed on fabric and assembled into quilt art.

She was born in Chicago and raised in the Midwest. She has lived with her husband, Ken, in Boulder, Colorado for more than thirty-five years.

Connections and Discussion Points for Docents and Visitors

As the introduction stated, layers are everywhere. Layers are inherent in the definition of a quilt (two or more layers, held together by stitch). They can be literal, conceptual, or both—so we invite viewers to look for the myriad iterations of layers in these works. The artworks ask us to contemplate the additive and subtractive experiences of time and memory as we observe the additive and subtractive techniques used to create each piece. They can, and should, be viewed with an eye to both the layering of image, meaning, and form, and to the individual voice of each artist. We ask viewers to take the time to ask questions about the artists' decisions, and to make connections between the works to further deepen the experience. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions posed, and keep in mind that individual pieces may connect to others in more than one way.

Layers, Literally

Many of the artworks in the exhibition use layers quite literally in their construction. Chiaki Dosho's layers in *The Profound* are thick and textural and hint at hidden meanings. A visual opposite is Linda Engstrom's *Cobwebs IV* in which ethereal layers play with light and air. Paulette Landers' piece, *Somewhere Between* is painted, stitched, painted again, cut and reassembled to create layers upon layers upon layers of rich color and visual texture. Where else do you see physical layers in the exhibit? What messages do they convey?

In contrast to Dosho's and Landers' tactile layers is Gloria Hansen's use of digitally layering pattern and imagery to create the illusion of depth in *It's Time*. Look for other pairs of complementary or contrasting layers.

Layers of paint, sheer fabrics, and indication of a layer removed, are evident in Peggy Brown's work, *Quite Quiet*. Similarly, Fenella Davies' *X Marks The Spot* layers multiple types of cloth of varying texture and opacity to create a rich composition. *Blue Burn* by Joanne Alberda suggests layers of peeling paint. Try to identify layers, vestiges thereof, or allusions to layers in other pieces in the exhibit.

Layers, Conceptually

The title of Regina Benson's piece, "Core Sample" tells us what kinds of layers she's representing. How do her choices of fabric and stitch convey layers of earth?

John Lefelhocz's *Of Irritability and Salinity* combines multilayered meaning with correspondingly layered digital illustration. Compare his use of digital imagery to Hansen's. How are they similar, and in what ways have the artists used the same technique of composing on the computer and printing onto fabric to different effect?

Time and layers are intertwined. Many pieces deal with time in one way or another. Several mark time with journaling, such as Jette Clover's *In Other Words*, Leah Higgins' *Happy Today*, and Denise Linet's *Letters to Myself -- Page 2*. Compare the painted versus sewn, and legible versus illegible in Clover's and Linet's pieces. What are other ways in which time and layers are connected?

The artworks in the exhibit combine imagery, fabric, and stitch using a variety of methods. Which techniques do you find most effective in communicating the theme of layers?

Voices

Layered Voices is as much about the unique voice each person expresses as it is about layers. How are these voices heard? The juror states, “Transformative processes brought about by natural forces, politics, social interactions, emotional states, and spiritual convictions were recurring themes in many artist statements. It became apparent that an exploration of the nature of time—particularly as it relates to the environment, memory and change—was a unifying theme in the 23 pieces I chose for this exhibition.” In viewing the artwork, ask, how does the layering of images, meaning, and form work together to convey a message.

Linda Colsh’s *Defiant* invites conversation about aging, about strength and stubbornness, independence versus feebleness.

Penny Mateer’s and Martha Wasik’s *THIS Revolution Will Not Be Televised #13 Protest Series* uses a traditional quilt format as the foundation for imagery highlighting the institutionalized racism still prevalent in the United States today. Kristin La Flamme’s *Death Shroud For Democracy* references ancient textiles to speak to current political woes. All the pieces in the exhibit, and these two in particular, confront our assumptions of quilt as object for warmth and comfort, and use that dissonance to invite deeper consideration.

Dinah Sargeant states, “I paint fabric, then search for narratives within the colors and shapes. Between what I see and what I intuit, a story unfolds.” What story does her piece, *Premonition*, suggest to you? Compare Sargeant’s painted piece to Roxanne Lasky’s layered and stitched coat, *Migration, Souvenir*, which also seems to voice a narrative.

Which voices in this exhibit speak loudly, and which convey a quiet message. When might one or the other be most effective?

An artist’s voice can be heard through the materials they choose to work with, their unique aesthetic, or what subject matter they explore. What might your voice be? Are there themes or issues you would, or do, speak to with your preferred means of expression?