

Turmoil & Tranquility

TURMOIL

DOCENT INFORMATION

Overview

Turmoil is an exhibition of 24 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.

Turmoil debuted, along with its complimentary exhibit, Tranquility at IQF Houston in 2016. Turmoil hung on the exterior of a space created by paneled walls, open to the hubbub of the greater exhibit hall. Tranquility hung in the interior space, providing a serene environment in which to view these works.

Turmoil is defined as a state of great disturbance, confusion or uncertainty. It can be personal and internal, societal or natural. In contrast, tranquility is defined as a quality or state of being, possessing the concepts of quiet, peacefulness, calmness or serenity. With both, we refer to the calm before the storm; the inner peace that follows catharsis. Opposites attract. Turmoil and Tranquility are in opposition, yet intertwined. The following information is for the Turmoil exhibit and may be used on its own or in concert with the Tranquility exhibit.

The Art and Artists



Pallbearer

33" x 28"

Margaret Abramshe

Nevada, USA

Margaret Abramshe is a studio art quilter living in Mesquite Nevada. She has a Masters in Art from the University of Northern Colorado and BA in Art Education from Florida International University. Portraits are her primary subject matter.

Her process begins with a carefully selected file of digital images. Initial design choices are made using a variety of photo manipulation software programs. When she is finished with the digital design these files are commercially printed on to fabric.

Abramshe alters the fabric with paints, inks, dyes, pencils, pure pigment sticks and liquid watercolors; treating the surface like a canvas. The final step is adhering additional layers of small cut commercial and other fabric to add depth and intensify the visual impact of the surface. Using a home sewing machine she densely quilts the surface.

Abramshe's artwork has been included in numerous exhibits local and national exhibits.

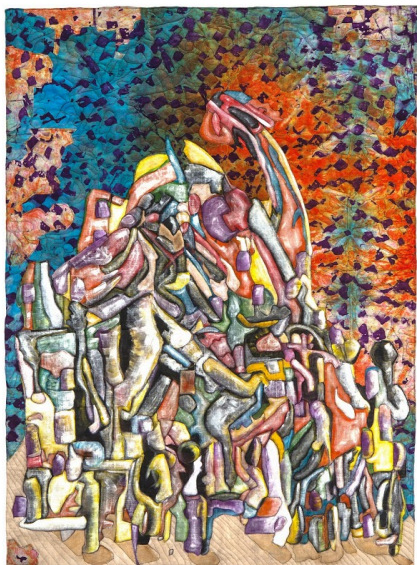


The Flames They Left Behind
39" x 27"

Holly Altman
New Mexico, USA

The arc of Holly Altman's artistic life began early. Whatever she saw or imagined, she could draw as a child. And her eye was largely consumed by nature. Galleries sold her work while she was still in her teens. She did biological illustration for a graduate department in college. Textile design in New York City occupied nearly 15 years, much of it devoted to botanicals. She then began to fabricate silver jewelry, whose themes again echoed nature.

Moving to Santa Fe took her in a new direction, fiber art. The medium, she discovered, enabled her to fuse design with an ability to create often in three dimensions. "Turmoil" leads her art down yet another unfamiliar path. Far from the naturalistic, it is impressionistic, political, metaphorical. The refugee crisis, she says, makes her think of feet and the numberless steps of their journey. But her imagination saw it in terms of hands.



Disheveled Love

48" x 35"

Karen Balos

California, USA

www.karenbalos.com

Karen Balos has been a visual artist for over 40 years. She lives and works in the Jingletown Arts district in Oakland, CA. Her quilts, sculpture, paintings, paper-cuts and stained glass installations have been shown in galleries, museums and private collections in the San Francisco Bay Area, New York City, Japan, Hungary, Slovakia, Germany and Mexico.

If you would like to view additional examples of Balos' fiber art and learn more about her background please visit her website.



Slow Death by Alzheimer's
40" x 32"

Diane Born
Oregon, USA

After college graduation, Diane Born practiced nursing until beginning a partnership with attorneys in medical malpractice lawsuits. To offset that structure, she became a docent at the Dallas Museum of Art, giving art tours to the public. When she and her husband retired and moved to Portland, Oregon, tours continued at the Portland Art Museum.

Born joined a fiber arts guild and began a journey she never expected to make. Fabric could function as a canvas for both painting and sewing. Hand-cut stencils featured myriad and intricate patterns, adding depth to quilted surfaces. Oil sticks or acrylics created texture, while multi-hued threads further embellished the work. Discharge paste removed color, leaving a suggestion of shadow.

Combining an intuitive style of design with the use of stencils, paint, silk organza or Lutradur, Born produces both realistic or imaginative work. She finds that pulling design from one's mind is the greatest challenge.



Breathing On Your Own

46" x 33"

Sandra Branjord

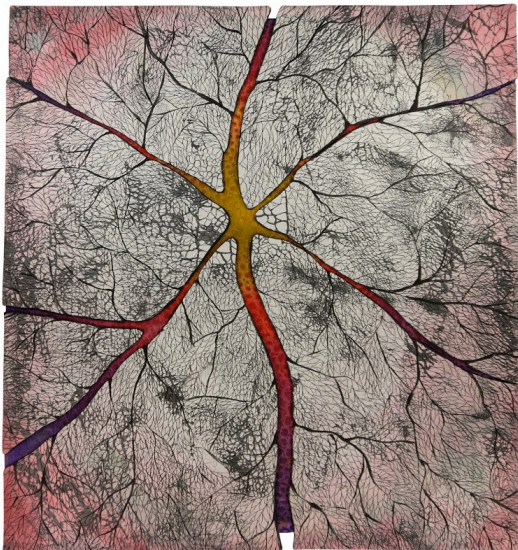
Arizona, USA

Sandra Branjord is a fabric and mixed media artist living in Sun City, Arizona. She has primarily been working on creating art quilts since 2008.

Branjord likes to use the quilting medium as a voice to tell her story. Not only her personal story, but the stories of women everywhere. Empowerment of women is a repeating theme in her work. Through her quilts she finds her own validation.

One of her most powerful series is ROSES FOR SANDY. This series deals with grief and the powerful effect grief has in our lives. Her quilt BREATHING ON YOUR OWN is a prime example of this. It portrays the birth and loss of a child. Through quilting Sandra has found that healing occurs as she takes out her feelings and shares them with the world.

Sandra's quilts have won many awards, and have found venues in both quilt show, exhibits and museums. She has authored numerous articles and is a frequent contributor to several national magazines.



Fracture

41" x 39"

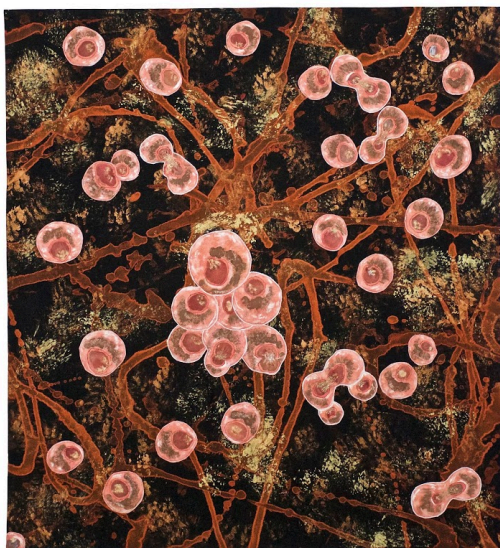
Betty Busby

New Mexico, USA

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. 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, she changed the focus of her art work 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.



A Cancerous Turmoil

37" x 34"

Carol Capozzoli

Connecticut, USA

Carol Capozzoli has been sewing for over 60 years and quilting for over 40 years. She has also explored many fiber crafts since her teen years. In the last decade Capozzoli has been combining her quilting with various other crafts to make art quilts for family and friends. She has exhibited at the Vermont Quilt Festival and at her local Quilt Guild. Capozzoli is a member of the Clamshell Quilt Guild in Waterford, Connecticut, a member of SAQA and was a member of the Mimosa Quilters (a small multistate quilt group no longer active). She is also a mentee in the SAQA mentorship program.



The weather in Her Head

40" x 40"

Linda Colsh

Maryland, USA

The art of Linda Colsh examines humanist themes, with special focus on aspects of growing old. Returned to Maryland after many years in Europe and Asia, she explores connections between natural spaces and populated, constructed places in her new series. Her imagery and minimal palette is known internationally through exhibition and in public, private and corporate collections. Among her honors are the European Quilt Triennial first prize and Nihon Vogue's Quilts Japan Prize. Colsh 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.



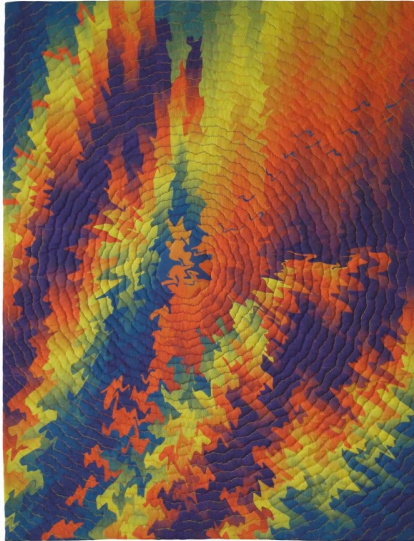
Flying Geese

30" x 40"

Vicki Conley

New Mexico, USA

Vicki Conley has been a professional artist working in ceramics for 35 years and owns a gallery, Pinon Pottery, in Ruidoso Downs, New Mexico. In 2003 she discovered quilting and quickly began using fiber as an art medium. Conley is drawn to the process of art and has thus always enjoyed mixed media; calling on ceramics, printmaking, photography and fiber to convey her ideas. Her work is an expression of the natural world she sees around her. Conley states, "When I encounter a compelling landscape or subject, my goal is not to replicate it, but rather interpret it in such a way that my emotional connection to it is evident to the viewer."



Spiraling Out of Control
34" x 26"

Linda Engstrom
Arizona, USA

Linda Engstrom began making quilts in the mid-1990s when she purchased some Japanese yukata and taught herself to dye fabric so that she could fashion a quilt. In subsequent years she explored discharging color, shaped-resist dyeing, or Shibori, along with silk screening, batik and a number of other surface-design techniques. Much of the resulting cloth found its way into her quilt making, which focused largely on contemporary images rather than traditional patterns. Current interests, in addition to a continuing love of surface design, include generating fractal images on the computer for digitally printing fabric as well as digitally altering and printing personal photographs for use in her quilts.



Crossings I
40" x 31"
Sandra Gregg
USA

As the daughter of an artist, Sandra Gregg has been creating art for as long as she can remember. Gregg began making art quilts in the 1990's and retired from full time employment in 2002 so that she could follow her passion and spend her time making studio art quilts. Since retiring, she has been working increasingly with fabric she's created herself.

The inspiration for Gregg's work comes from the interaction of color, place and shape. She creates fabric with dye and paint and loves the unexpected results that frequently occur. She sometimes finds that the fabric alone is complete by itself as a whole cloth piece.

Gregg often works on a number of pieces simultaneously (sometimes working in series) because she works intuitively and needs time to study the work on the design wall before deciding how to proceed to the next step. Sometimes adding text as another layer, which can provide texture and meaning, she looks for a balance of light, line, color, space and form. Eventually the piece tells her that it is complete.



Tied in Knots

36" x 26"

Betty Hahn

Arizona, USA

www.BettyHahnFiberart.blogspot.com

In 1974, Betty Hahn began using the quilting skills her Grandmother taught her when she was nine years old, making 1 or 2 quilts a year. In 2007, having retired from making art for designers, her quilting moved in a new direction, art quilts. She discovered painting and quilting didn't need to be separate! She had been a canvas artist and a quilter with traditional roots and skills.

Hahn's work now is as much about painting as quilting. She uses her domestic machine and her new frame-mounted machine to add texture to her painted art. She sometimes quilts on painted canvas, adding applique through the quilting process. She has also had her paintings digitally printed on fabric and then over-painted, appliqued and free motion stitched. She has recently begun creating art on her digital tablet and digitally producing it on silk. Most of her work is intuitive, playing with color, line, shape and composition. Subject matter appears, not the other way around even when she's "answering a call".



1953 Popcorn

46" x 32"

Jim Hay

Gunma, Japan

www7.wind.ne.jp/jimhay/

Jim Hay's parents gave their first generation American son an adventurous spirit. Cowboy movies and motorcycles led to large cast bronze sculptures, an MFA degree and a professorship at Michigan's Olivet College.

Jim has now lived in Japan for more than 25 years. When his house needed curtains he decided to sew them from old kimono cloth. Those rich colors mixed with Jim Hay stories to become large art pieces. He continues winning international awards and currently has artwork traveling on four continents.

Jim Hay was born in the 'Motor City'. The foot pedal on a sewing machine has the same feel as the gas pedal on a car. He wants to go fast, race around the cloth, skid around corners.

Now with an added touch of Japanese gentleness.



Turmoil in Hiding

60" x 40"

Jim Hay

Gunma, Japan

www7.wind.ne.jp/jimhay/

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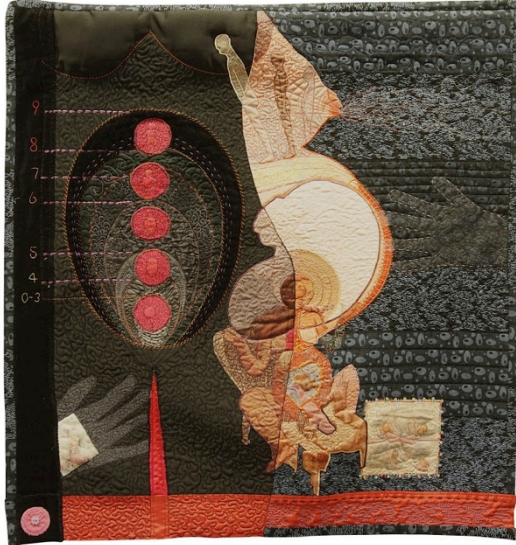
Childhood Taken: The Doffer Boys
42" x 36"

Patricia Kennedy-Zafred
Pennsylvania, USA

Patricia Kennedy-Zafred has been telling stories through the medium of textiles and art quilts for over twenty years. Her prize winning work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, and has been published in books and magazines throughout her career, most recently *Exploring Fiber Art* (Schiffer Publishing, 2017).

Kennedy-Zafred's work is often inspired by a single photographic image, which sets into motion the production of silkscreens, dyeing fabrics, printmaking, image transfer, and finally, the assembly and quilting of the work. Each step is developed to create a visual connection with the viewer through the use of layered processes and materials.

Kennedy-Zafred's work has been accepted into such major juried exhibitions, as Quilt National, Visions, Fiberart International, Artist as Quiltmaker, Fantastic Fibers, Quilts=Art=Quilts, CraftForms, Fiber Options, New Legacies, National Fiber Directions, and SAQA juried exhibitions. Her work has won top prizes at both International Quilt Festival and American Quilt Society competitions.



Baby Quilt
30" x 28"
Jill Kertulla
Virginia, USA

Jill Kertulla's work comes from a place of openness to both the materials and the process. All is fair game. The specific materials and processes vary from piece to piece, but fabric, stitching, and other fiber materials, respond well to the manipulation, layering, and textures that she prefers in her work. The direct manipulation of the materials by her hands is very meaningful to her, and why she uses "handcraft" materials and processes. While the pieces may be technically two dimensional, Kertulla considers the process sculpture-like.



Conflict No. 1

36" x 36"

Judy Kirpich

Maryland, USA

From 1978-2014 Judy Kirpich was the founder/CEO of a nationally known branding agency, Grafik, where she oversaw a team of over 35 strategists and creative professionals. Under Judy's direction her firm received over 650 awards for marketing and communication excellence.

While Kirpich has always been interested in sewing it was only in 2005 that she discovered improvisational quilting and began annual studies with Nancy Crow. Kirpich started showing her work in 2011. Since that time she has been honored with numerous awards and been represented in invitational and juried shows. Most recently she was awarded the Quilt National Japan Prize and was included in a select group of artists showing their work in Color Improvisations 2 and Mastery: Sustaining Momentum.

Kirpich lives near Washington DC with her husband David and splits her time between there and her studio in Lewes, Delaware.



Marklin Nebula

134" x 35"

Jean Marklin

Massachusetts, USA

Creating has been a nourishing and necessary activity since Jeanne Marklin was young. Photography was her first love, working in fabric developed later.

Through workshops with master quilt artists Nancy Crow, Jan Myers Newbury, Ricky Tims, Sue Benner and others, Marklin found her own way of working. Learning to dye fabric became a passion.

Marklin dyes fabric with a composition already in mind, or to explore a “what if” about color, shape or line, and then let it speak to her in order to create original compositions. She has spent 20 years learning and practicing piecing, dyeing, quilting and design. Her studio is in a small barn across the driveway from her house. The peace and tranquility of her small college town has added a great deal to her ability to focus on her artwork.



The Goddess of Never-Ending Chaos

46" x 35"

Kathy Nida

California, USA

Kathy Nida's work begins in dreams, letting memories of the day, good and bad, capitulate with pen and paper. These days, the images translate into the texture of fabric, beads, embroidery, paint, and pen. She trusts her subconscious ability to reconcile each drawn object within the whole, to connect the pieces. Nida came to art quilting from being a printmaker, but was taught embroidery and sewing as a child. She has been printmaking for over 25 years, making quilt art for over 20 years, working in embroidery for over 35 years, and exploring images of women since birth. In short, she tells stories, currently with fabric.



Echos of Demons

38" x 25"

Claire Passmore

Wiltshire, UK

experimentalthreads@gmail.com

Claire Passmore trained as a Primary School teacher and taught for many years in the United Kingdom and Poland. She subsequently worked for the University of Gloucestershire, mentoring and assessing student teachers and retired in 2006. She now fills her days experimenting with cloth, thread, dye and paint and has been making quilts and other textile art since that time. Not wanting to completely give up teaching she regularly holds workshops for quilters and in 2015 wrote her first book, 'Quilting Originals', which aims to help people develop strategies to design and make their own original work.

Passmore is strongly influenced by matters of social conscience and this often influences the subjects she chooses for her quilts. She exhibits widely in the UK and overseas and belongs to a small number of very supportive art quilting groups.



Mother Serves the Turkey II

31" x 26"

Martha Ressler

Pennsylvania, USA

Martha Ressler was a painter first, specializing in industrial subjects and working class neighborhoods. But the allure of fiber art won her away. She has been sewing since she was 13, making all of her clothes by high school.

She walks a lot, and she often takes photos or does sketches of her surroundings that serve as her inspiration. Moving from Pittsburgh to rural eastern Pennsylvania opened up a new vista for inspiration.

She collects found objects and papers and likes to include them in her work. "I see the detritus of everyday life as "markings" made by my fellow humans." Ressler explains.

Lately she has been "finding" objects in her surroundings, photographing them, printing on cloth to create fictional, and often humorous, landscapes.



Ukiyo – The Sadness of Life
43” x 32”

Deborah Runnels
Oregon, USA

Deborah Runnels (nee Mathis) was born in Los Angeles and moved with her parents to Southern Oregon in 1962. She graduated from Southern Oregon College with a teaching degree majoring in art and earned her master’s in 2009. She married her college sweetheart in 1971 and taught for several years in Klamath Falls, Oregon. She taught in multiple capacities from Adult Education (GED) to adult art classes for Klamath Community College.

Runnels took her art experience with various art mediums and translated them into her art quilts. She has had solo gallery exhibits in Klamath Falls and has been selected for group shows around the region. Her work was selected from the ‘Reader Challenge’ submissions for the cover of the December 2013 Quilting Arts Magazine. She joined Studio Art Quilt Associates in 2014 and her work is currently in two traveling exhibits; *Blending Poetry in Cloth* and *Concrete and Grasslands*.



Above and Below

53" x 24"

Mary Ruzich

Oregon, USA

Mary Ruzich is an avid hand-dyer and intuitive designer. After a career of teaching in Alaska, she now devotes herself to her passion of fiber art. With a gypsy spirit, she travels frequently and carries her craft with her as much as she can. For many years she has offered classes in her dye studio in her winter home in Mazatlán, Mexico. She is a longtime journal quilter (200+ and counting), has written articles for *Quilting Arts Magazine*, and in 2014 self-published a book, *Signs of Life: A Year in the Life of a Gypsy Quilter*, featuring 63 journal quilts along with their accompanying stories. Now based in southern Oregon, she stays active in local fiber arts groups.



Shattered – The Labyrinth of Loss
45” x 38”

Maggie Vanderweit

Ontario, Canada

maggievanderweit.blogspot.ca

Maggie Vanderweit is inspired to create by the interconnected social, personal, spiritual and natural universes. She creates original contemporary art with hand-painted and rust and botanical dyed fabrics, silk fusion, felt, hand embroidery, beading, collage and intricately machine quilted surfaces. She also presents a variety of lectures, retreats and workshops to guilds, shops, art colleges and conferences.

Her work is displayed and sold in galleries, shops, and textile museums and international textile art exhibitions. Vanderweit’s work is in many publications and has been operating her business Stone Threads Fibre Art since 2000. She also has a book, “Stone Threads,” a retrospective of almost 40 years of stitching.

Connections and Discussion Points for Docents and Visitors

Turmoil is a disturbance, confusion, uncertainty. It can be an emotional, stressful, or confusing experience. It can be personal, or experienced on a global scale as in war, or ecosystems imbalanced by careless use. The chosen artworks in this collection reflect the experiences and interpretation of the artists. Turmoil may be less obvious in the use of media, but apparent in the underlying concept of an individual piece. Bright colors might mask a dour subject, or express a cacophony of voices and emotions. Devastating subjects can nevertheless be depicted in beautiful forms and compositions.

Look closely at the artworks. Listen to the sounds of the images depicted. Feel the emotions of the characters portrayed. What is seen, what is absent? How does it affect you the viewer? If both exhibits are shown together, notice the interplay between turmoil and tranquility and experience not only the differences between them, but also an appreciation for the nuanced similarities they share. The following discussion points will help the viewer delve a little deeper into the artwork. It's important to remember that there is no one correct answer and that artworks may be appropriate for several responses.

Technique

Art quilting is open to myriad ways of manipulating fabric and fabric-like substrates. Look at the various ways the artists have presented their subject matter. Which techniques are you familiar with? Which are new to you? Which seem particularly appropriate to the theme of the exhibit? The following are some examples of works using various techniques. Note that some quilts may fall into several categories.

Patchwork and piecing:

Conflict No. 1 by Judy Kirpich

Above and Below by Mary Ruzich

Shattered — The Labyrinth of Loss by Maggie Vanderweit

Applique/collage with fabric:

The Goddess of Never-Ending Chaos by Kathy Nida

1953 Popcorn by Jim Hay

Mother Serves the Turkey II by Martha Ressler

Painting on fabric:

Slow Death by Alzheimer's by Diane Born

The Weather in Her Head by Linda Colsh

Echoes of Demons by K. Claire Passmore

Digital Imagery:

Pallbearer by Margaret Abramshe

Tied in Knots by Betty Hahn

Baby Quilt by Jill Kertulla

Identify techniques in other artworks or combinations of techniques.

Color

Look carefully at the use of color in the quilts. Are certain colors or palettes used more? Are there colors or palettes excluded? What colors suggest turmoil to you?

Compare the use of similar color schemes in two pieces on grief: *Shattered — The Labyrinth of Loss* by Maggie Vanderweit and *Breathing on Your Own* by Sandra L. Branjord.

Yellow is usually considered a happy color. How is it used in the following works?

Spiraling Out of Control by Linda Engstrom

Tied in Knots by Betty Hahn

Conflict No. 1 by Judy Kirpich

Themes

Several of the artworks address similar themes. Compare the similarities and differences between these works, and look for others which speak to each other, or to the viewer, in related ways.

Transitions, for good or bad are times of turmoil. *Baby Quilt* by Jill Kertulla uses dark colors and overlapping imagery to convey the uncertainty and fear inherent in pregnancy and birth, but also the mystery and wonder of it. Kathy Nida's *Goddess of Never-Ending Chaos* personifies the daily struggle of juggling responsibilities and expectations. *Pallbearer* by Margaret Abramshe is somewhat the opposite of Kertulla's quilt as it highlights the emotions surrounding end of life.

Slow Death by Alzheimer's by Diane Born, *A Cancerous Turmoil* by Carol Capzzoli, and *Echoes of Demons* by Claire Passmore all tell stories of illness. In particular, *A Cancerous Turmoil* seeks to find beauty as a way to come to terms with the disease.

Turmoil is not only a personal ordeal; it exists in group experiences as well. Two pieces, *The Flames They Left Behind* by Holly Altman, and *Crossings I* by Sandy Gregg both depict the plight of refugees. Interestingly, they both use a technique in which the color is removed from black fabric, leaving behind a lighter hue. In what other ways do these two pieces compare or contrast. Compare them to Jim Hay's piece *Turmoil in Hiding* which also reflects global turmoil.

Fracture by Betty Busby, *Ukiyo—The Sadness of Life* by Deborah Runnels, and *Above and Below* by Mary Ruzich all center on the tremendous energies contained in and around the earth. How do they hint at the potential turmoil if released? The artists seem to have found beauty in these subjects despite the specter of devastation; what is your reaction?

Uncertainty or the unknown can cause us stress, but our lack of understanding belies the fantastic mystery of the world. *Flying Geese* by Vicky Conley celebrates the seeming chaos of a flock of birds, roiling and squawking yet acting as one cohesive unit. Deep space is a beautiful mystery as well, and *Marklin's Nebula* by Jeanne Marklin pays homage to the colorful diaphanous discoveries seen through the Hubble Telescope.

Turmoil is not necessarily negative. Two pieces, *Disheveled Love* by Karen Balos, and *1953 Popcorn* by Jim Hay take a more lighthearted approach, the former celebrating the exciting and tumultuous emotions of love, and the latter the confusion and hilarity of being surprised by happenings on the big screen. Where might you find the positive in turmoil?

When Shown With Tranquility:

Three artists have work in both the Tranquility and the Turmoil exhibits. How are their two works similar to each other; how are the works different?

Linda Colsh

Sandy Gregg

Patricia Kennedy-Zafred

Can you find any other “pairs” which seem to speak to each other by way of subject matter, technique, or appearance?

Are there any pieces in the Turmoil exhibit which you might consider to be tranquil? Are there any pieces in the Tranquility exhibit which express turmoil to you?

Were there pieces in either exhibit whose inclusion surprised you, either by content or by color and composition?