

Kathleen Sharp, fiber artist, Tucson AZ

From earliest cave recordings through the many manifestations of contemporary art, visual artists have made 'marks' as one form of communication. I use stitched work – pulling a threaded needle through layers – to participate in this age old act. In my chosen medium, many before my time have done the same resulting in the rich quilt tradition from which my work sprung in the 1970's.

The making of one of my collage quilts begins with a gathering process. Using oil pastels and torn papers, a flow of images, color, and markings are tracked in notebooks and journals. A hunt begins for the right textile to place against another that will evoke exactly the tension or flow or rest point dictated by some inner force. Fabrics are then cut and torn into pieces to define line and form. Unexpected changes are made. A transformation occurs. What was once a disparate pile of fabric and notations now evokes place, event, feeling.

The underlying vision of the work is further supported in a labor intensive process of crafting the materials into a final quilt form. Pieces are collaged and stitched into a whole cloth for a top layer. A back layer is designed. Dense quilting stitches unify the layers and create a fingerprint signature. Installation procedures are defined. The work – which may range in size from 10" to 10' -- is titled, signed, dated. It is finished.

Biographical:

Sharp's process and ideas as a quilt artist have evolved over 30+ years of studio work. Originally from North Carolina, she lived in the Washington DC area as a young adult where she worked in community mental health. In the late 1970's she left that field to pursue art-making fulltime and soon began to apply earlier studies of fine art and surface design to quilt making. She continued those studies and further developed her art quilts while residing in Paris France and the San Francisco CA bay area. In 2004 she moved to Tucson AZ where she maintains a studio for fiber art-making and small classes.

Selected exhibitions:

AZ Designer Craftsmen 50th Anniversary, Mesa Art Center, Mesa AZ, summer 2010
Studio Art Quilt Associates, Shemer Art Center & Museum, Phoenix AZ 2009
Craftsmanship 2008, ASU Gallery 100, Tempe AZ, juried
Pieced Together, Phoenix Airport Museum, Sky Harbor Airport, Phoenix 2007-08
Southwest Fiber Art: Color of Light, Tohono Chul Park Gallery, Tucson AZ 2007
Creative Force Then, SAQA invitational, Houston TX 2006
Tubac Center of the Arts, Tubac AZ, Arizona Designer Craftsmen, juried 2005
Design With Heart, Santa Fe Art Institute, Santa Fe NM, 2004
Women of Taste: Quilt Artists & Chefs, Smithsonian Institution, US tour 2000-03
Full Deck Art Quilts, Smithsonian Institution, US tour 1995-2000
California Design 2000, 1998, '96, '94, '92' Baulines Craft Guild/CA Craft Assn, juried
Comments on the American 20th Century, Connell Gallery, Atlanta GA, 1999
Dwellings, San Jose Museum of Quilts/Textiles, San Jose CA, guest juror & artist, 1997-98
Quilts x 6, Robert Allen Fine Art, San Francisco CA, 1997-98
Studio Quilt Invitational, Kurts Bingham Gallery, Memphis, 1995
Art Quilt International, Ginza Gallery, Tokyo, Japan, 1994

Selected publications:

The Art Quilt, Robert Shaw 1997
Artweek, Vol 27 #4, April 1996
Quilter's Newsletter, October 1994
Fiberarts Magazine 2/98, 4/95, 11/91
American Craft, Oct/Nov 1991

Art Quilts: Playing with a Full Deck, Pierce & Suit 1994
Fiberarts Design Book VI, V, IV, III '99,'95,'91,'87
Surface Design Journal, Spring 1992 (cover)
Living with Quilts:50 Great American Quilts, George 1998
The Creative Force: exhibit catalog Studio Art Quilt Assn 2006

Public Acquisitions include:

Stanford University, Palo Alto CA
Hewlett-Packard Corp, Palo Alto
Marble Associates, Cambridge MA
Alza Corporation, Palo Alto, CA
City of Sunnyvale, CA
Kaiser Permanente Medical, various locations

Associations: Studio Art Quilt Associates, professional artist member; Friends of Fiber Art International, artist member; Arizona Designer Craftsmen, juried member

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Goat in Boat study



The Wish



Pea Green Boat



Tribute

