



CONNECTIONS
The Grand National 2015



Sowing from Dawn to Dusk

Birdie McLean

Edmonton, Alberta, 2014

Cotton fabrics, tulle, rayon and metallic threads. Fabric collaged, final layers of random thread work with varying stitch lengths to create depth and variation. 34" x 13.75"

Inspiration: Designed in a workshop by Anna Hergert, November 2013; inspired by Van Gogh's *The Sower*, 1888.

Many people in urban areas have lost their connection to the land. This piece is dedicated to our Canadian roots, the memory and the spirit of the prairie pioneers and their strong connection to the land. They came with nothing, excited by the promise of a better life for themselves and for their children. They built and planted, struggling with extreme temperatures, the war and depression; toiling from dawn to dusk, not only in their fields but also in their communities to build the good life we all enjoy today. (Also cover detail)

Welcome to THE GRAND NATIONAL QUILT SHOW 2015

The Grand National Invitational Quilt Show is presented biennially by a volunteer committee in co-operation with the Joseph Schneider Haus National Historic Site. This year's show is being hosted by the Schneider Haus in its three exhibition spaces, opening May 10 and continuing through September 27. We are thrilled to be presenting this national show deep in the heart of Waterloo quilt country at this special historic site and we are indebted to the Region of Waterloo for making possible this important partnership.

With each Grand National show, quilt and fibre artists from across Canada are challenged to address a different theme in their work. In 2015, the theme was "Connections" and more than 100 pieces of quilt art were submitted by

talented artists coast to coast from which the Committee assembled the impressive collection here. Among the fifty plus quilts accepted for the show are several outstanding pieces quilted collaboratively by groups of artists.

The Committee extends a sincere vote of thanks to all the artists that were inspired by our challenge, but particularly those whose work will grace these galleries for the four months of the show allowing the public to 'connect with' outstanding examples of the quilter's art.

Enjoy Connections with us this year and come back to the galleries of the Joseph Schneider Haus in 2017 when we celebrate our nation's 150th birthday with the next Grand National, Oh! Canada.

We would like to acknowledge the generous assistance of the following sponsors in presenting the 2015 Grand National, Connections:

Janome Canada, Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada Inc., Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation, Waterloo County Quilters' Guild, Wonderfil Specialty Threads, Northcott, Creative Sisters Quilt Studio, Fabricland (Kitchener), Friends of the Joseph Schneider Haus.

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Curator's Statement

For this 2015 Grand National exhibition, it was the theme “Connections” that got the creative juices flowing in quilting studios coast-to-coast. Connecting, linking, bridging, networking are more important than ever before in our global community and the entries chosen for this year’s show, particularly the four pieces created collaboratively by groups of quilters, certainly indicate that Canadian quilters are among the artistic community’s finest communicators. Inspired by the “Connections” concept, they have conjured up interpretations that are endlessly intriguing and thought-provoking.

The most sentimental of interpretations must be the quilts that demonstrate how the needle can stitch memories together linking generations past and present. Family ties bind several such quilts to the “Connections” theme. *Bittersweet* (detail left), for example, evokes the red/golds of autumn and memories of loving parents; *Lighting the Past* transports one to the ruggedly beautiful maritime setting that lured Scottish forebears to the new world. *By Hand, with Love*, appliquéd with Slavic needlework images, summons up memories of a mother and grandmother...

Several quilters responded in a quintessentially Canadian way expressing strong connections to ‘place’ in their work and giving the natural landscape top billing. The boreal forests of North Western Ontario are depicted in a masterly quilted tribute to Tom Thompson, *Northern Serenity*, ...the shared landscapes and road patterns that link Alberta to Saskatchewan evoked in a dramatic green/gold graphic composition, *Green Piece*, ...the breath-taking beauty of the Rockies in *The Hiker*, rendered in triangular forms underscoring the stability and balance, the healing strength that reconnecting with the natural landscape can effect.

Many artists depicted place-to-place connectors in their work, the technology that was necessary to maintain communications across the vast expanses of our Canadian landscape – road systems, trains, lighthouses, digital transmission towers. *Spur of the Moment* and *Iron in the Blood* are stunning depictions of locomotion, past, present and future.

Slightly more adventuresome are the artists that ventured beyond the predictable, envisioning

such unlikely connectors as the DNA that carries our genetic information or literature, music and poetry, those traditional media that have long connected generations, nations and cultures. One artist's work, *DNA Daughters*, connects her offspring to eleven generations in their matrilineal line. Another, inspired by travels to the east coast, composed a poem to accompany her colourful Maritime streetscape and quilted a white steepled church to invoke *Mary Mack*, the Scottish folk ballad that would serve as the cultural connector she sought.

Perhaps the most poignant of entries are those that address the tragic loss of connection that can set one emotionally adrift. The spectre of homelessness is conjured up by *Pathways through the Neighbourhood I & II* and the somewhat whimsical *Hobo Town*. A textile tribute to the pioneers on the Prairies, *Sowing from Dawn to Dusk*, exudes sincere regret for our lost connections to the land.

So the theme has certainly been creatively addressed by the quilters of the Grand National

2015 but these exuberant works of art have many more lessons to offer up when examined at close range; they provide a veritable smorgasbord of delightful quilting and fibre art techniques that will fascinate the viewer and inspire many an intrepid needleworker. Worthy of note are the many examples of hand-dyeing both with chemical and natural dye materials in this year's quilt art; tea and iron-dyeing help to heighten the sobering pallet of tones representative of ageing machinery and... homelessness; natural dyes in *Not Everyone has a Home (detail right)* – osage, madder, logwood, marigold – produce a wonderful, muted landscape for the house forms that deliver the artist's message.

So connect with the Grand National 2015 and enjoy this outstanding assemblage of personal quilterly narratives that represents technically, artistically, and aesthetically the best the quilting and fibre art world has to offer in Canada today.

Susan M. Burke, Curator





Locks Kingston Mills

Pamela Allen, Kingston, Ontario, 2013

Recycled and commercial fabrics. Hand raw-edge appliquéd and machine quilted. 27.5" x 42.5"

A peaceful picnic spot by our historical Rideau Canal, beautiful Kingston Mills is the first lock in the lengthy canal connecting Kingston to Ottawa. Connection to this lovely spot for the community was broken several years ago when a heinous "honour killing" of wife and daughters took place in the upper basin.



Spur of the Moment

Art KWilt Connection: (left to right)
Judy Pearce, Kitchener, **Nancy Winn**
Waterloo, **Ilene Atkins**, Kitchener,
Margaret Notar, Waterloo, **Dorothy**
Holdenmeyer, Waterloo, Ontario, 2015

Assorted commercial and tea-dyed fabrics, leather, vinyl, metal, Teflon, buttons, satin cording, Tsukineko ink. Hand-painted, raw and finished edge fusible appliqué, paper pieced, collaged with nets, machine stitched, embroidered and machine quilted. 72" x 34"

Inspiration & credits: Waterloo Central Railway & Spur Railway History; permission granted by Janet Seally, photography by Dorothy Holdenmeyer

Trains have been a vital part of our region's history, connecting it over many decades to other regions far and near. Art KWilt Connection is a newly formed group of art quilters. Many of us have a strong ancestral connection to our country's spur history. Each group member was given a slice of the larger picture to work, using the medium of her choice to best reflect the era to be represented. By working on this project together, we, the artists have enjoyed our newly formed connection and look forward to creating many more pieces together.



Viewers' Choice
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Northern Serenity

(left to right) Judy Christie, Keewatin, Rhonda Glofcheski, Keewatin, Maryanne Nilson, Kenora, Pat Schwartz, Kenora, Lenora Zimmerman, Kenora, Alice Fenelon, Kenora, Pat Shewchuk, Kenora, Nancy Bergman Kenora, Ontario, 2014

Eight separate quilts sewn onto a gallery style stretcher bar (depth 2"), cotton fabrics, tulle, metallic and cotton threads. Discharge-dyed, fabric painted, raw edge appliquéd, free-motion quilted. 50" x 50"

Inspiration: Watercolour study for painting, "Northern River", by Tom Thomson

Our quilting group of eight, from different walks of life, has been together for many years. Our friendships connect us. We are also connected to our environment, the beautiful boreal forest of Northwestern Ontario. Inspired by a study by Tom Thomson, we created this fabric piece, which reflects the soft glow of forest light playing through the trees. We shared fabric and construction ideas but, most important, we relied on each other's energy to see the project through.

On Purpose

Marie Black, Englehart, Ontario, 2013

Commercial fabrics, thread, buttons embellishments, painted and hand-dyed felt. Machine pieced and quilted. 34" x 34"

Whenever I see a Log Cabin quilt I think of my Grandmother. This is the only pattern she used in her 72 years of marriage to make numerous quilts for her 26 grandchildren, their children, friends and family. *On Purpose* is my abstract interpretation of this old-time favourite. None of the blocks are the same; the sashing strips vary in size and shape, and borders were cut with a slight curve, all on purpose. I wonder if Grandma would approve!





La Famille

Hélène Blanchet, Calgary, Alberta, 2011

Cotton, velveteen, ultra-suede, cotton batt, embroidery floss, glass beads, turquoise chips. Reverse appliquéd, hand-quilted, embroidered and beaded. 39" x 41"

This piece is about connections within the family and the natural world. The family is made up of herons sitting high in a tree in the safety of their home and although colourful, the shape of their wings allows them to meld into the canopy while the branches reach around them in a loving embrace. The parents sit protectively over the chicks who look to them for guidance.

Traditional elements play a significant role. The tree is the Tree of Life that supports them. The sun allows all life to exist. The cloud spirals represent ancestors and generations to come. The multi-layered borders provide barriers to keep negative elements away from the safety of their home.

The Hiker

Hélène Blanchet, Calgary, Alberta, 2015

Cotton, tulle, silk, faux leather, cotton batt, embroidery floss, crewel wool, turquoise and glass beads, miniature toys, willow. Hand-appliquéd, quilted, beaded and embroidered; stumpwork, scrunching, dyeing, painting. 16" × 36"

A few years ago, my son went through a difficult time while living in downtown Toronto. He was in a bad way when he came to us. We took him for a hike in the Rockies. His relief upon entering the forest was palpable and you could literally see him returning to himself. This piece is about the connection we have to the natural world and our need to maintain it for our own sakes. Triangles figure prominently – the mountains, trees, alpine lake, field, the long view. They symbolize stability and balance, peace and tranquility, and reaffirm the healing strength of the forest and our connection to it.





My Mother

Gordana Brelih, Toronto, Ontario, 2014

Painted Stitchery-Witchery, gesso, soy wax resist, gold foil, silk organza dyed with leaves, linen, rusty metal, old lace, cotton and silk. Machine and hand-stitched, painting, foiling, stamping, free motion stitching on water-soluble film. 27" x 38"

I think about my mother often especially since I have been living far away from her for a long period of time... As a little girl I was told many stories about my mother as well as my grandmother. This piece represents my journey through time and connection to my roots and my female lineage.

Birds of a Feather

Karen Osatchuk, Edmonton,
Elinor Burwash, Edmonton,
Wanda Cracknell, St. Albert,
Penny Odegard, St. Albert, Alberta, 2013

Wool, felt beads, beads, embellishments. Hand-appliquéd, trapunto, hand and machine quilted, needle felting, rug hooking, beading, embroidery, couching. 30" x 30"

Inspiration: Tranquility collection, a Sandy Gervais design for Moda Fabrics

Four friends with common interests including quilting, gardening, and surprise – birds, were inspired by a Sandy Gervais for Moda fabrics. We each chose a bird that spoke to us, enlarged it and interpreted the chosen bird using wool, a material we all enjoy, as the base along with our imaginations and skills. At an appointed time the blocks were revealed with each one clearly reflecting the background talents of the creator.





Another Story

Millie Cumming, Fergus, Ontario, 2015

Primarily vintage and upcycled fabrics (silk, cotton, synthetic), some new commercial fabrics, vintage buttons and embroidery, one photo-transfer. Hand-appliquéd, machine pieced and quilted. 43" x 54"

Inspiration: The buttons and the vintage fabric were the starting point for this quilt.

Who is she? Is she a wife, a widow, a mother? If she has children, do they visit? When Canada Post no longer delivers door-to-door, will anyone come to her door? What connections does she have beyond this room? Is she the person I will become?

Bittersweet

Millie Cumming, Fergus, Ontario, 2014

Commercial and hand-painted fabrics, some upholstery. Hand and free-motion embroidery, hand-appliquéd and beaded, machine pieced and quilted. 63" x 52"

Inspiration: Autumn, bittersweet plant, family memories

A season, a flower, a memory can all connect us to people or events. My Mom always loved receiving branches of bittersweet from my Dad, and although they both died in the 1980's, both in the fall, I remain very connected, particularly in the autumn, and especially when I happen upon a bush of bittersweet.



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Not Everyone Has A House

Margie Davidson

Edmonton, Alberta, 2013

Cotton fabric, cotton batt, stencil cream, natural mordants and dyes including tannin, alum, osage, madder, logwood, and marigold, fabric paint, cotton threads, cotton embroidery floss. Hand-dyed, stenciled and block printed, machine pieced and quilted, hand-stitched and quilted. 44" x 44"

We all have an intimate connection to quilts simply because they are made of cloth. The “house” motif furthers this connection as a visual representation of shelter. Houses also connect us to family, the beginnings of our connections to community. Nine different log cabin blocks allude to this. Visiting remote villages in India opened my eyes to the value of natural dyes and repetitive stitching. Using natural dyes supports my personal connection to water conservation. Musing about houses and homelessness led to block-printing the border with images depicting different types of homes.



Green Piece

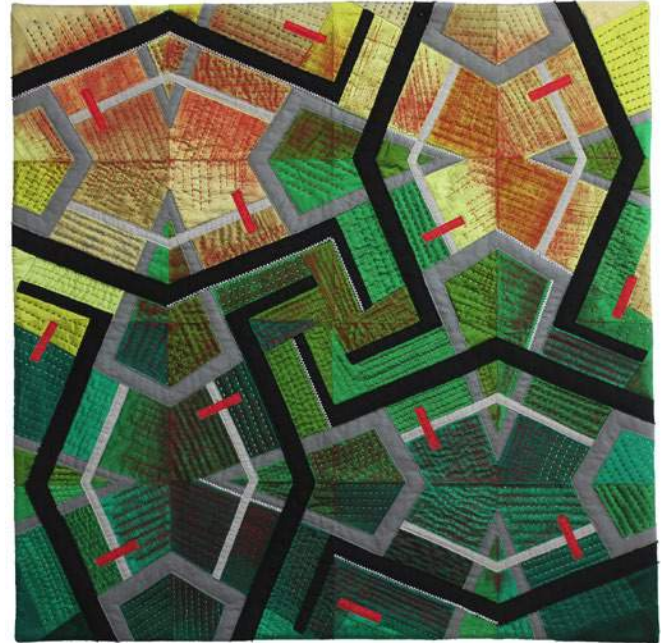
Alison Dean Cowitz, Calgary, Alberta, 2015

Silk Dupioni, 100% cotton, Shiva oil paintstick, Wonderfil Dazzle and Spagetti thread, 100% cotton thread. Paper-pieced, machine and hand stitched. 25" x 25"

Inspiration: Design techniques introduced by Anna Hergert

This art quilt represents my love letter from Alberta to Saskatchewan. It was inspired by my summer road trips from Calgary to Emma Lake and Muenster. I enjoy the beauty and spirit of these Canadian provinces. The land is similar – from forests to farmland, fields of crops to vast prairie landscapes. We are also linked by highways, rural roads and our natural resources. I feel connected to Saskatchewan and my new friends that live there – we're not that different, you and I.

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Indian Splendor

Donna Funnell, Milton, Ontario, 2014

Silk and cotton fibre art. Machine and hand sewn, hand-embroidered and beaded. 17.75" x 27"

As a fibre artist, I work to develop compositions that convey my love of colour, texture and attention to detail. Part of my process is to examine my materials and explore the possibilities of using stitch to express a particular cultural influence from a variety of sources.

I tried in this fibre art tapestry to demonstrate my connection to the colourful fibres and costumes of India. I applied layers of upholstery fabric, sari ribbon from costumes, rayon threads and recycled jewellery beads.

Mummy 2

Anna Gajewska, Crossfield, Alberta, 2015

Hand-dyed cotton, cotton, satin, viscose, yarn. Machine pieced and quilted, raw-edge appliquéed, couched and piped. 25.5" x 67"

A long time ago, when I was a student at the Academy of Fine Arts in Poland, I performed a project Mummy printed on cotton. Today I'm a Canadian Resident and the theme "Connections" encouraged me to relate my Polish work with Canadian. I decided to duplicate the same project but using a technique I never worked with in Poland – quilting. I have changed colours as well, from pure graphic lines to multicolours. It's proof of how colour impacts form.

"It's in Your Genes"

Janet Elliot, Kingston, Ontario, 2014

Fabric from second-hand store blue jeans, scraps of various fabrics. Fuse-appliquéed, screen printed and machine quilted. 12" x 12"

Inspiration & credits: My son's PhD research project on statistical models used to describe genetic sequence data. Thanks to Peta.

My son's research involved statistical analysis of DNA data. I also studied DNA: hence the title *It's in Your Genes*. The background layer is made from blue jean fabric, and depicts the bands on X-ray films that were originally used to sequence DNA. The ATCG letters are part of the sequence of a compound that I studied. The coloured "clouds" are used in my son's analysis to depict events that wax and wane; the mathematical formulae printed on the "clouds" are part of the analysis. The quilting is a fingerprint pattern: DNA sequence analysis is sometimes called DNA fingerprinting.





Glacier Waters

Leah Gravells, Edmonton, Alberta, 2015

100% cotton, 200 batik fabrics in 3/4" strips, Hobbs Heirloom batting, Gutermann thread. "Quilt as you go" technique, machine pieced and quilted. 42" x 52.25"

Water connects us all to life. The 3/4" strips represent the streams of water found in sky, land, and waterways. The glacier dust creates unique turquoise coloured waterways (lakes and rivers). It is important that we preserve the quality of our water for future generations.



From Coast to Coast

Phillida Hargreaves, Kingston, Ontario, 2014

Assorted fabrics and yarns. Appliquéd, machine quilted and hand-embroidered. 24" x 15"

I love how easy it is to stay in touch with loved ones who live on the other side of the country. I just get out my phone. Because it is so easy, I assumed that the technology to make this possible was invisible, but it's not. Once you start looking for them, cell phone towers are everywhere. In rural settings they extend beyond the tree tops, and have exported street furniture to the countryside. Are they an incursion or a facilitator? They are not beautiful, but think of the messages they transmit which keep us all connected.

Award of Merit
for
Use of Colour &
Precision in Piecing
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Hundreds and Thousands

Anna Hergert, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, 2013

Hand-dyed cottons, fiberglass screening, hand-twisted cords, copper washers. Whole cloth, decorative machine embroidered stitches. Exclusively created on the Janome Horizon 7700 received for the 2010 Grand National Janome Award of Excellence. 33" x 49"

Inspiration: Moroccan Wedding Sashes

The linear quality of Moroccan wedding sashes was my inspiration. I selected techniques suggesting a visual connection to weaving and embroidery techniques, and employed my sewing machine's decorative stitches to create a textural quality. Engaging the stitches demanded my full attention carefully guiding the strips through the machine. This meditative practice provided an emotional connection – each stitch conjured up metaphors and thoughts of what the life of the wearer might be.

Hundreds and thousands... Joys... Laughter... Tears... Words spoken and unspoken... Actions taken and suppressed... Comfort and pain – the bridal sash, connecting women and their experiences throughout history.





Fragile Planet

Pat Hertzberg, Caledon, Ontario, 2015

Canvas, thread, cord, scrim, dye, stain. Ripping and fraying reconstruction. Machine-quilted, free-motion embroidered, dyed, stained and distressed. 39" x 30"

As various warring regions are breaking apart (for differences in race, religion, politics and economics), the battle to save our shared, degrading global environment is overlooked. Instead of more divisions on this fragile planet, we urgently need more universal connections

Motherboard

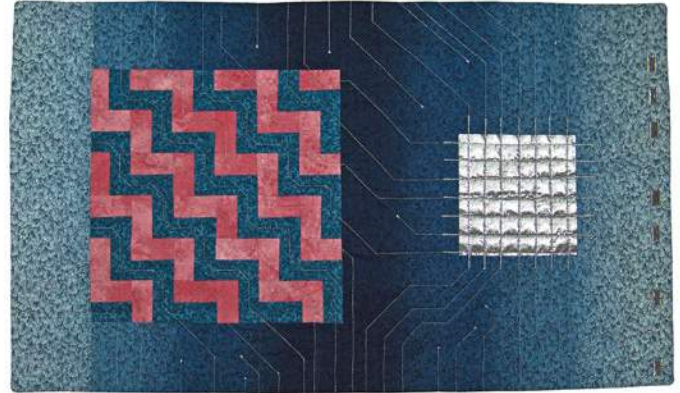
Joan Hug-Valeriotte

Guelph, Ontario, 2015

Hand-painted and commercial cottons, metallic thread, lamé. Machine-pieced and quilted using embroidery stitches. 38" x 22.5"

The rail-fence portion of the quilt had been sitting on my design wall, waiting for me to decide what to do with it. When the "Connections" theme was announced, the thought of computer circuits went through my head, but it wasn't until a friend's son opened his computer and let me photograph a circuit board, that I knew what to do and how. That's when I learned there should be no right angles in the circuitry.

Mothers were the ones who usually kept the connections with family and friends through letters, visits and phone calls. Now they do it by email on computers.





White Log Cabin Study in Texture

Joan Hug-Valeriotte, Guelph, Ontario, 2014

Cotton, silk, satin and lamé. Machine-pieced and longarm machine quilted. 23.5" × 23.5"

Inspiration: My daughter wanted an all-white log cabin quilt, so I made several different types of blocks before she decided she wanted a strictly traditional pattern and these were left in the box for me to do with as I wished.

I feel connected to the people and places that my scraps came from. It's as if I were transported back in time. In this little quilt, a study in textures, there are bridal remnants given to me by a friend who knew I was having trouble finding white satins and brocades, as well as pieces from my 1970's silk and satin blouses and from my mother-in-law's 1930's trousseau. The piece consists of four off-centre log cabins in fabrics ranging from smooth silks and satins to heavily textured cottons. The freehand "sunflower" quilting was done on my longarm machine.

Hobo Town

Marie Kajdaksz

Victoria, British Columbia, 2013

Cottons. Machine pieced and quilted, hand and machine embroidered. 50" x 56.25"

Credits: haiku poem stitched on quilt with permission by poet Nika

Hobo means, "home bound". Hobos rode the rails or walked the roads to return to that special place with which they had an emotional connection. Many sought work in areas they passed through, looking to find new communities to call home. As they travelled, they left a trail of symbols that indicated to others the pros and cons of a particular area. Fifteen of these symbols have been embroidered on this quilt. Today many of us work and travel around the world looking for a new place that beckons us to call it home.





Keahou Bay, Hawaii

Maureen Kay, Elora, Ontario, 2015

Artist's own hand-dyed cotton, commercial gold cotton. Appliquéd using Esterita Austin's technique, over-painted, machine quilted and thread painted. 38" x 31.5"

Inspiration: Personal photographs.

Familiar relationships and places are cherished after a great loss. The grief journey can also embrace new places and people. Keahou Bay, near Kona, the Big Island of Hawaii, is my recent connection. My spirit soars once more. Note re Keahou Bay I have taken four workshops from Esterita Austin, totalling at least two weeks in length over the past three years. She is my valued mentor. I began the fabric work on Keahou Bay in 2014 when I was on holiday in Kona. Esterita and I spent four days working on our individual pieces in a studio. Esterita was most helpful in making suggestions re the overpainting of the fabric in parts of this piece. Other than that, this piece has been done independently. Carlene Keller, who lives in Kona, is my valued fabric-dyeing teacher.

Ready

Tracey Lawko, Toronto, Ontario, 2011

Thread, cotton fabric, batting, stabilizer. Dimensional appliquéd and free-motion machine stitched through at least 3 layers. 16" x 12"

After gardening one day, I dropped my gloves on a bench. I liked how they landed so I sketched them. I later created them in fabric and thread and set them on a densely stitched background. The well-worn gloves are both representative and symbolic. They retain the shape of the hands that worked them with evidence of past achievements ground into their surface. On a sunny day, they sit on a wood bench ready to be picked up for the next task. In the words of the 18th century French philosopher, Voltaire, “*il faut cultiver notre jardin*” – we must cultivate the garden where we live.





Lighting the Past

Judy Leslie, Coquitlam, British Columbia, 2015

Feature Panel: wholecloth cotton. Border: artists' hand-dyed linen. Heavily machine thread-painted and quilted; subtle text is designed to encourage viewers to examine this piece up close. 19" x 33"

Inspiration: Personal photos taken on site in 2012

The Point Prim lighthouse represents my paternal family connections. In 1803 my forebears sailed with a group of Lord Selkirk's Scottish settlers to homestead on the Point Prim peninsula, Prince Edward Island.

Later on my great-grandfather, John Gillis, was keeper of the Point Prim lighthouse from 1897 until 1909. One hundred years after his death, my sister and I climbed worn steps up to the lantern room for the first time. As we viewed the surrounding area, we reflected on how our predecessors had so courageously journeyed to and settled on the red clay soils of this 'bonny' island.



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Traditional Handwork
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Creative Sisters
Quilt Studio

By Hand, with Love

Kate Madeloso, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, 2015

Repurposed cotton, silk, wool, hand-dyed and printed repurposed cotton, various embroidery threads. Hand appliquéd and embroidered, machine stitched. 16" x 30.5"

Inspiration: Annie Romanchuk and Dora Oosichoff

My heritage is Slavic – grandparents from Russia and the Ukraine. My first memory of cloth, as a child, was of an ornately embroidered pillow in my Ukrainian Grannie’s house. I barely remember my Russian Baba but am now in possession of her ‘birthing shirt’, a white handwoven linen nightshirt worn during delivery of her six children.

I created “By Hand, with Love” in memory of my mother and grandmothers. As I appliquéd these Slavic needlework images, the needle seemed to have its own energy as memories illuminated each stitch. Their love lives on.





Flight for Joy

Elizabeth McDowell Heagy

St. Clements, Ontario, 2013

*Cotton fabric, wool batting. Machine pieced and appliquéd.
64" x 92"*

Inspiration & credits: The design for the tessellating doves is traditional, and I was introduced to it in a back issue of Patchwork Quilt Tsushin (no. 81, 1997). Yoko Ueda had devised a method for piecing the doves, but since I wanted a flatter outcome for my tablecloth, I changed some of the piecing to appliquéd. Lynn Fulton Photography.

While working on this dove tessellation (a design which, when connected, does not overlap or leave spaces), I noticed that my doves seemed to be on a mission, much like the participants in a Ride to Conquer Cancer. I realized that their flight would be to help us all rediscover Joy. I canvassed family members for “pledges” – ideas for those things which bring or facilitate Joy – and these I have stitched onto the facing of this tablecloth, in order to infuse them with Joy when connecting over our Christmas dinner table.

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Clockworks

Carolynn McMillan, Burlington, Ontario, 2015

Hand-dyed cotton lawn, cotton and rayon quilting threads. Raw-edge fused appliqué, machine quilted on domestic sewing machine. 29.25" × 23.5"

The spring is wound; the pendulum is set swinging, the escapement clicks in and out of the big gear and the clock tick tocks counting off the moments of each day. Many connections inside the clockworks mesh with each other, keeping things moving. A chipped gear tooth, a broken spring, failure to wind the clock, all keeping it from making the necessary connections to record the seconds and years of our lives. As it ticks on, it connects present lives to past generations and looks forward to the future.

Award of Merit
for
Interpretation of the
Theme
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The Friends of the
Grand National

Poppies Aglow II

Carolynn McMillan, Burlington, Ontario, 2014

Hand-dyed and painted cottons, hand-painted silk organza. Rayon threads and embroidery floss. Raw edge appliqué, collaged and machine quilted on domestic sewing machine hand-embroidered. 22.125" × 33"

I have always loved poppies with their delicate crinkled silken petals. On my honeymoon in 1966, I photographed Corn Poppies growing wild in a Wiltshire farm field. Finding the photo recently connected me to that experience and inspired me to make "Poppies Aglow II".

2014, was of course the 100th Anniversary of the start of World War I. Poppies brought to mind a favourite poem, "In Flanders Fields", by Lt. Col. John McRae. His poignant reference to the corn poppy in that well-loved poem will forever connect us all to that tragic event.





Seven Create

Northern Ontario Fibre Artists: (left to right) Terry Whyte, Swastika, Marie Black Englehart, Marnie Mascioli, Timmins, Jane Hughes, South Porcupine, Kit Ormsby, Swastika, Silvia Bos, Englehart, Karen Pilch, Englehart, Ontario, 2013

Painted and dyed fabrics, paint, crayons, fabric dyes, embroidery thread, buttons, wire, nails and other embellishments. Hand and machine quilted, fabric manipulation, beaded, Zentangle and raw-edge appliquéd. 120" x 55"

Without restrictions on theme or design each artist worked independently on their specifically shaped panel, using several surface designs and quilting techniques to produce texture in a neutral palette. The most challenging part of this collaborative project was connecting the 21 sections and getting the quilt to hang straight without distorting the horizontal lines.

Mary Mack

Margaret Notar, Waterloo, Ontario, 2014

Commercial cottons, satin, organza, netting, water-soluble stabilizer, tartan ribbon, yarn, beads, wire and a bell. Fuse appliquéd, free-motion and machine stitched, hand-appliquéd, machine embroidered and printing on fabric. 14" × 16"

Inspiration: Scottish folk ballad

Mary Mack was the Scottish folk ballad my family learned from Gaelic singer, Raymond, one drizzly

August evening in a remote pub somewhere in the northern Highlands of Scotland...

This folk song is typically sung with increasingly rapid tempo which makes you trip over your words as you near the end (or was that the whiskey?) The church prototype was adapted from the Main Street United Church in Antigonish, Nova Scotia (where one son attends university.) I've integrated a few stanzas of Mary Mack into the roof lines of this little quilt. Read them aloud first, then try again, quickly.



Curator's Award
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Quilters' Guild



White framed windows looking out to the sea
Halifax, St. John, St. Andrews makes three.
Pastel coloured houses are colouring book sweet
On the Charlottetown, Cape Breton, Antigonish Street.

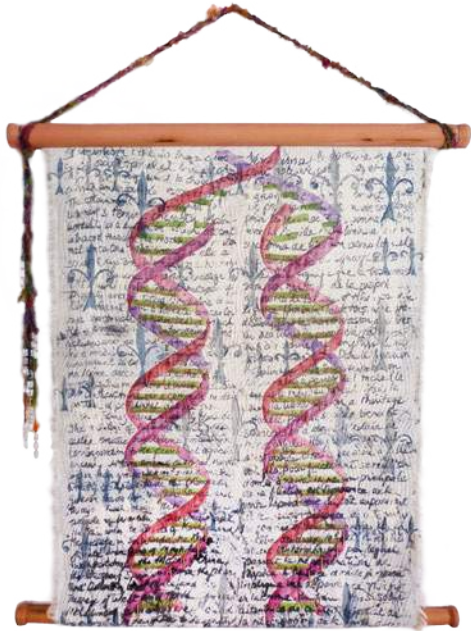
X is symbolic but it's not to mark the spot;
It's a ring and education where my money's gone – a lot!
Red sands, high tides: some views that are most prime.
Had to capture them all in this Maritime rhyme.

Ode to the Maritimes

Margaret Notar, Waterloo, Ontario, 2014

Hand-painted and commercial cottons, metallic and embroidery threads, beads, buttons. Machine, free-motion and hand-stitched, machine and hand-embroidered. 57" × 18"

After many trips east to take in scenery, buskers, scenery, inlaws, scenery, and a university campus, this poem (left) is what I have to say.



DNA Daughters – Two Sisters Rooted in the Feminine

Deb Plestid, Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia, 2011

Cotton, cotton and rayon threads, bamboo batting, silk slubs braided on a wooden rod. Complex cloth – resist, dye paste stamping, discharge stamping, shiva paintstick, bead embellishment, free-motion machine quilted. 31" x 43"

For my daughters whose matrilineal lineage is connected to the cultures of France, Ireland, Scotland and England, and in Canada to the French, English and Acadian cultures of Quebec and Prince Edward Island. The eleven generations of women are named on the DNA bars, the beads beside each name represent the generation to which the women belong. The duality of my daughters' identities is reflected in the double DNA strand. The strand is set against the definition of feminism and matrilineality in both of Canada's official languages.

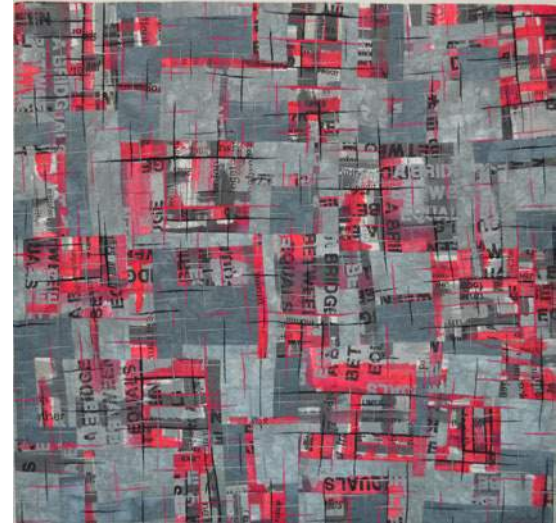
A Bridge Between Equals

Susan Purney Mark

Victoria, British Columbia, 2014

Soy wax resist fabrics, screen-printed and hand-dyed, cotton and linen. Machine pieced and quilted. 35" x 34"

Inspired by words that connect us, I used them in piecing together the fabrics. I considered the stitching to be links between us and hope that we can always consider each other as equals.



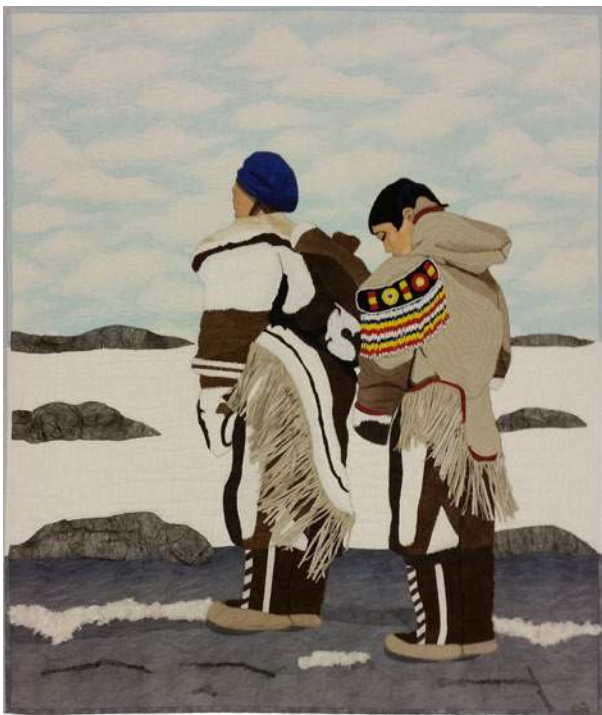
The Lights are Much Brighter

Susan Purney Mark

Victoria, British Columbia, 2015

Hand-dyed and commercial fabrics. Machine pieced and quilted. 20" x 27"

Looking into the windows of buildings in the dark of night yields little glimpses of those that dwell within, separated by walls. I thought of how we are linked, nonetheless.



Pillars of Strength

Veronica Puskas

Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, 2014

Cotton, Tygar, seed beads, ultra-suede. Fuse appliquéed and thread painted. 33.38" x 39"

Inspiration & credits: Photo taken by Grampa Nipisa c. 1950; Al Cote, longarm quilter

As an artist, I try to convey on fibre my feeling of admiration towards the two women who have had a profound affect on my life. Through their guidance I learned about our traditional way of life and of the struggles to transition to this modern world. Family connections, immediate or not, are of the utmost importance to surviving the harsh climate and sometimes unforgiving land. My journey brought back loving memories and thus my efforts to enhance their traditional clothing to show them in the best light possible.

Curtain Call 2

Elaine Quehl, Orleans, Ontario, 2012

Hand-dyed cottons by artist and Prismacolor artist pencils. Fusible reverse appliquéd and free-motion machine quilted. 41" x 19"

Today the majority of Canadian citizens live in urban environments, often making it difficult to maintain our vital connection with the natural world. For many of us, our closest and daily connection to nature is the garden, either our own or a local public garden. There we can observe the cycle of life, to which we are all connected, through the changing seasons. I observe the changing colours of hosta leaves in my own garden and in the many gardens I visit on my travels.





Possibilities

Hilary Rice, Stirling, Ontario, 2015

Hand-dyed cotton, silk, various other textiles, thread and cord, glass and composite beads, acrylic ink. Collage/raw edge appliquéd, free-motion stitched, couched, bobbin stitched, beaded, metalwork and painted. 19.5" × 24"

"Rather than seeing emptiness in the blank spaces, see possibilities."

As a textile artist, I enjoy thinking of things in 'fabric terms'... and so with this quote, I enjoyed making the connection that we can think of the possibilities available to us as the warp, and the choices we make along the creative path, as the weft. When these are combined, woven together, connected, they become the fabric of our artistic lives.

The "Connections" Fibre Art members contributed a fabric swatch which connected to each of them in a meaningful way. The possibilities were endless. Stitch connects us.



Toward Wholeness

Hilary Rice, Stirling, Ontario, 2015

Thai silk, heat altered synthetic textiles, thread and cord, faceted glass beads, copper, aluminum. Collage, free-motion stitched, couched, bobbin stitched, beaded and metalwork. 23.5" × 28.75"

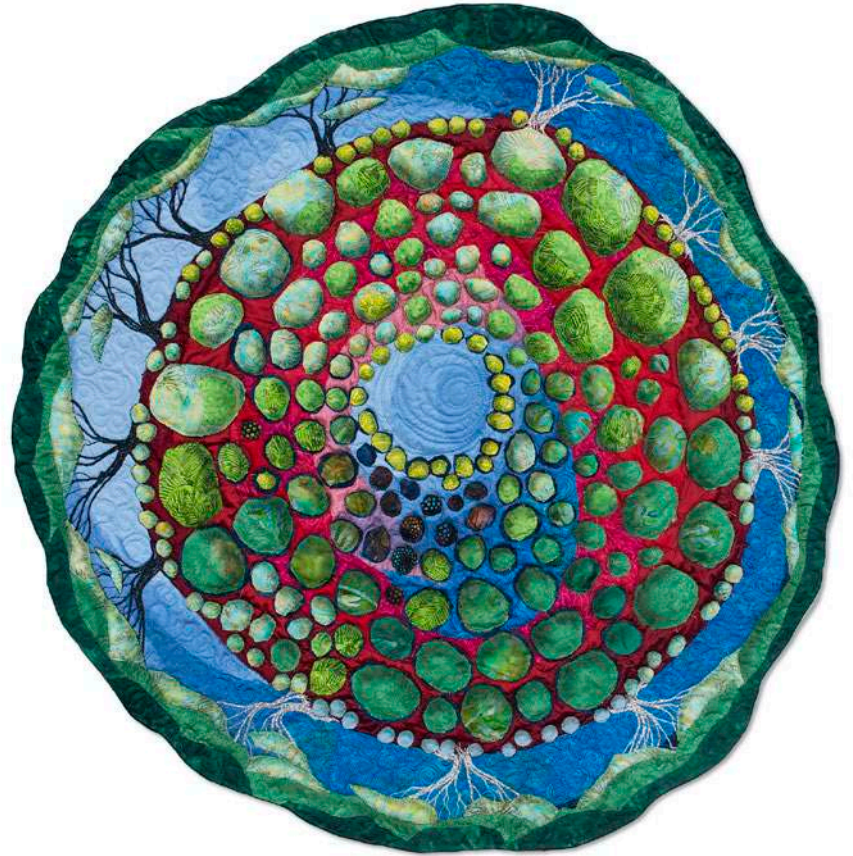
Everything in creation is connected... scientists are only now discovering the amazing underground communication shared by forests of trees! This piece began with my understanding of this marvel. Deep within, we are all connected to the Creator. In some mysterious way, tendrils of healing bind us all. Seeds of forgiveness are planted. Healing is possible.

Source

Lorraine Roy, Dundas, Ontario, 2014

Silk, cotton, mixed fabrics. Machine appliquéd, embroidered and quilted. 48" × 48"

In the top six inches of forest floor, lies a vast and flourishing communication system as old as photosynthesis itself. This exquisitely balanced symbiotic relationship between mycorrhiza fungi and tree roots provides a network of channels for resources and messages between trees. The resulting plant chatter is as complex and efficient as our own worldwide web. This quilt shows trees connecting around the shared resource of water, as it bubbles through rock and soil. The design is also inspired by a cross section of tree root showing the layout of cells around a central channel.





Old Poplar Tree and New Leaves

Susan Selby, Springfield, Manitoba, 2014

Cotton and sheer fabric, dye, fabric paint. Hand-dyed, printed and painted, raw edge appliqué, free-motion quilted. 27" × 28"

I am amazed and thrilled by the bright green, almost translucent leaves that emerge each year from the old poplar trees in my neighbourhood. The old, fissured, gnarly, lichened bark of these trees is a stark contrast to these newly unfolded leaves. How can the two be connected?



Between the Crosses

Lois Wilby Hooper, Moores Mills, New Brunswick, 2011

Cotton fabrics and glass beads. Machine pieced and appliquéed, 3D appliquéed, machine quilted and hand beaded. 33" × 37"

Inspiration: World War II documentaries and the loss of a family member in the Royal Canadian Navy in the Battle of the Atlantic.

The view of a military cemetery with rows of graves reveals the outlines of bodies beneath the grass. Some are missing limbs; one grave contains only a small box of remains. Though many years have passed, the family ties are strong. Lest we forget.

Title Encoded in the Squares

Linda Sharp, North Vancouver, British Columbia, 2013

Cotton, velvet, paint. Painted, hand and machine quilted. 30" x 48"

Inspiration: By all those who think differently

The Cold War was a palpable threat during my childhood. My practical response to the ever-present danger of apocalypse was to learn about codes. You can find the encoded title of this piece by using the legend at the top and the bottom of the artwork to decode only the symbols appearing in red squares.

Find the connection.

If you are captured, eat this quilt.





The Stitch that Binds

Sue Sharpe, Lindsay, Ontario, 2015

Hand-dyed cottons and vintage laces. Machine pieced and quilted, hand-appliquéd, embroidered and beaded. 25" × 33"

Inspiration: Vintage Lace by Elizabeth Makepeace Wootton (1874–1973) and Annie Wootton Deller (1880–1963); crochet work by Jane Lindsay Kelly (1874–1973)

This quilt is a collage of some of the beautiful handwork that has been lovingly preserved and passed down through five generations of my husband's family. The pillow lace (bobbin lace) was made in the 1870's by his great-great-grandmother, who was herself a fourth generation lace maker from England. This lace was then sewn to fine handkerchiefs and dresser runners by his great-grandmother. The crocheted pieces were added by the next generation, as were bits of lace left from wedding veils and christening gowns. Vintage beads are along the bottom.

Dr. Troyer's Apothecary Garden

Annette Yeager, Simcoe, Ontario, 2014

Cotton fabrics. Broderie perse, hand appliqué, pieced and quilted. 30" x 30"

Inspiration & credits: The knot-hole design was sketched by William Yeager, who also provided ongoing suggestions. A number of elements were adapted from clipart sources (beehive, apple tree, bird, swan, bee, butterfly, mortar & pestle, moon phases). The 'Floral Sunburst,' was adapted from a design in a mid-1800's quilt (found in 'Grandma's Best... Pieces of the Past,' BH&G, 2002).

Overwhelmingly associated with our own times, 'connections' were vital to the survival of early generations. In Upper Canada, one Dr. John Troyer (1753-1842) was the first settler of the Long Point region. Troyer was an accomplished gardener, pioneering 'apple' arborist, and passionate herbalist, preparing medicines from his own plantings. Both his Pennsylvanian background and the native community contributed expertise and insights for his work. While in his time Dr. Troyer's reach was local, today his legend stretches into the 21st century, with global access at the 'click' of a button.





Markings #2

Engelina Van Essen, Mitchell, Ontario, 2012

Hand-dyed cotton by artist, batik, paint. Reverse raw edge appliqué, bleached, painted after quilting, hand and machine embroidered. 30.5" x 22"

I am intrigued by the markings on old houses, barns and pottery that are found along the Dutch/German border. These markings, many of which are being lost due to redevelopment and modernization, reflect the craftsmanship. The heart, tree of life, and sun spiral were found on an old salt-glazed pot from around 1700. Without the preservation of craftsmanship, artistry, and what these show us of days past, we lose our connection with an earlier world of thought. O God, grant us an honest life and a peaceful dying. ANNO 1680 June 2... and artistry of a bygone era.



To the Other Place

Maggie Vanderweit, Fergus, Ontario, 2015

Hand-dyed, painted and collaged fabric. Soy wax resist, fabric painted and stamped. 22" x 23"

Inspiration: Petroglyphs of American Southwest and Canada

Doorways connect us, and I like to imagine the possibility of walking through special portals into alternate times, places and realities. The figure is inspired by petroglyphs of ancient cultures, but I added a bird's head and a sway to her hips.

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Iron in the Blood (Ghost Train)

Lois Wilby Hooper

Moore's Mills, New Brunswick, 2013

Rust-dyed and discharge-dyed cottons. Painted with acrylic paints, inks, and artist pencils, free-motion machine quilted and hand embroidered. 29" x 39.5"

Canada would never have existed without the railroads, and the lives that were lost in building and maintaining them. Both the use of Morse code and time zones were due to the railroad. Their legacy lives on today.





Pathways through the Neighbourhood I

Joanne Young, Kitchener, Ontario, 2014

Cotton, silk, upholstery fabric and batting. Hand-dyed, tea and iron-dyed, hand and machine stitched, hand quilted. 34.5" × 46.5"

For a number of years I have been inspired by my working class neighbourhood in downtown Kitchener. This has involved me with the theme of scrap in various forms and has left me with an interesting palette of colours which I have used to connect me with a version of the traditional patchwork design, Drunkard's Path.

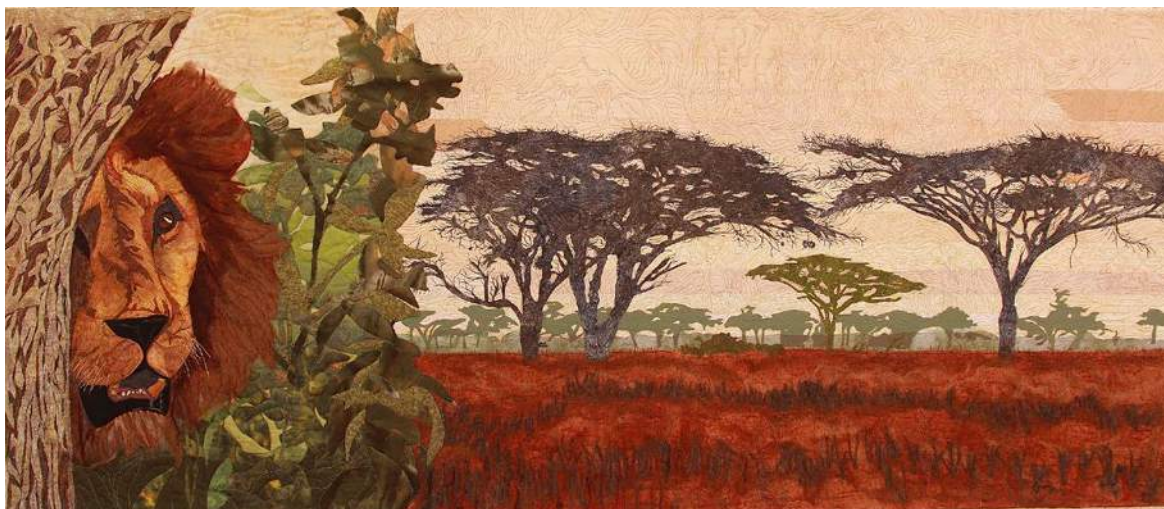
Pathways through the Neighbourhood II

Joanne Young, Kitchener, Ontario, 2014

Cotton, linen, silk, vintage Japanese fabrics. Hand-dyed, tea and iron-dyed, machine stitched and quilted. 29" x 38.5"

For a number of years I have been inspired by my working class neighbourhood in downtown Kitchener. In this variation of "Pathways..." I connect with the patchwork tradition of string quilts. A string quilt is made with strips of irregular widths sewn to a foundation block of either paper or fabric.





Serengeti Moment

Krista Zeghers, Treherne, Manitoba
& Coreen Zerr, Nanaimo, British Columbia, 2014

Hand-dyed cotton and wool. Raw edge appliqué, thread painted, needle felted, ghost images quilted. 69" x 30"

Inspiration: Photographs from African safari by Don Zeghers

This realistic pictorial wall quilt truly is a work of “connections”. The two quilters who created this piece, are quilting colleagues who live 2300 km apart, getting together only twice, for the beginning and end of the process. Networking through the use of email, text messages on iPhones, and blog sites kept the artists on track as they worked separately; technology connected them over the long distance of this vast country of Canada. Also, the lion, himself, is making connections with his prey. Look closely and you will see the connections to his thoughts!



Detail – *Indian Splendor* (page 17)



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