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Patricia Aresen

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Category: Joy

Clapping Trees – An Autumn Mandala

The trees of autumn look as if they are standing in one grand ovation to their creator – listen and you can even hear their applause!

"All of the trees of the fields will clap their hands!"

(Isaiah 55:12) says it perfectly.

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Lisa Arthaud

Warrenton, Virginia

Category: Healing

Hiking With My Brother

My brother Steve and I shared many adventures. As adults, we usually hiked. As kids, we collected agates, chased lightning bugs, skipped rocks, and caught frogs. When he passed away, I was devastated. Just two weeks earlier, he had mailed me carefully chosen agates from the stream on his property. I decided to make a hiking quilt to grieve his death. I chose empty boots and 3 frogs by a stream lined with agates. Needing a break, I said aloud, “Steve, let’s go hiking”. I put his agates in my pocket and went deep into the woods. I unexpectedly heard a familiar childhood sound, “KERPLUNK”! I turned my head and saw three frogs leap into the water. Crying. Laughing. My brother still hikes with me.

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Yvonne Bayham

Donaldsonville, Louisiana

Category: Healing

Transcendence

Barely 12. Left behind with cult leader. Kids work the farm. Adults travel to recruit. Billy is 4. I adore him. Farm pond. Many kids. No adult. Billy – gone. We search. I watch as teen boys pull his limp body from muddy water. Adults don't even come back for his funeral. So alone, confused, scared. I feel responsible. Should have known, should have saved him. I carry this burden 40+ years. Break down. Therapy. Start to heal. I create an image for myself and for Billy, of the care we both SHOULD have had. I look at her and imagine us swept up in her arms, comforted and protected as chaos swirls her gowns around us. Safe and soothed as she wraps us in her wings and keeps watch for us, over us. She offers refuge and a reminder: It's not your fault.

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Bonnie Bobman

Scottsdale, Arizona

Category: Grief

Striped Stripes

Our family history, traditions, and spirituality greatly affect how we design our quilt projects. We project a unique point of view, react to a situation, and express emotion through our art. More important than balance, color, and stitch quality is the underlying message the quilter tries to convey to the audience.

Stripes are unnatural lines that create solid boundaries and tangible separation. An historical depiction of simplicity within atrocity during the Holocaust. Every day, we are linked with unmatched connections to both global tragedy as well as triumphs.

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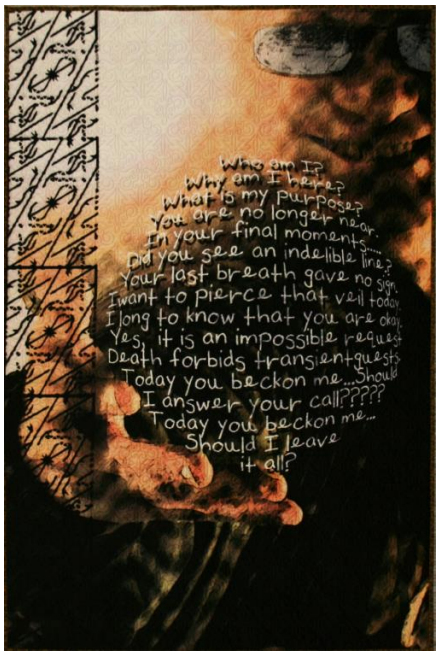
Julie Brandon

Williamson, New York

Category: Grief

Grief is the Price of Love



This is a statement about grief and loss. In 2011, my dear husband, Dr. Rob Brandon MD, was in horrible accident which left him brain dead.

In his health care proxy, he chose me to make his life decisions.

The decision to end all supportive services and let him go was one of the hardest decisions I have ever made. It haunts me to this day.

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Sharon Burns

Whittier, North Carolina

Category: Grief

Dignity Denying Death March

My work depicts the trauma imposed upon those who await death resulting from convictions for violent crimes. Nooses hang over the heads of those sentenced to death, often for decades. Many are guilty of the crimes for which they are convicted. Others are innocent, while many suffer from mental illness resulting from severe childhood trauma.

As a Christian I believe that individuals are offered a full, natural life, during which one may reconcile with God with sorrow and remorse for all sins. I grieve for the victims of violent crimes but also for those who perpetrated those crimes and die at the hands of our government.

This piece memorializes the 24 individuals who died in 2023 at the hands of our government. May they rest in peace.

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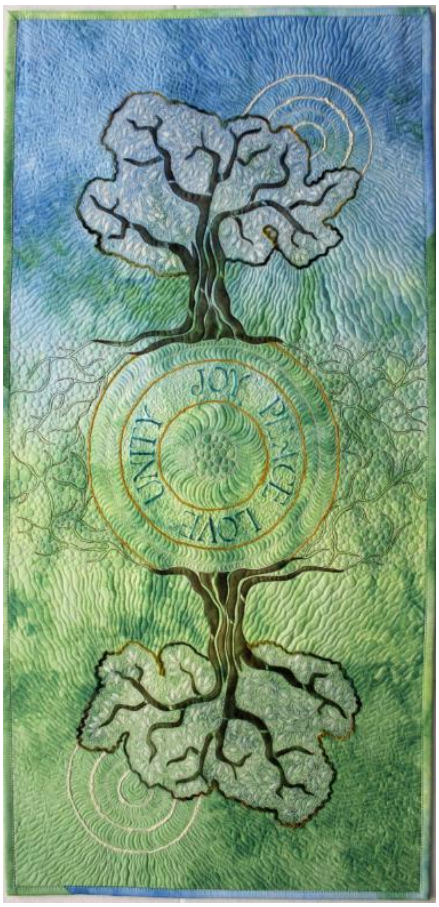
Patricia Caldwell

Lincoln City, Oregon

Category: Inspiration

Connections



If we could stand tall like a tree and listen to the wind blowing through the branches and leaves maybe we could feel a little peace and joy. If we could be part of the root system of a tree we might be able to work together with love and unity.

We are all connected in some way or another. If just one of us took the time to step back and promote Joy, Love, Peace and Unity, maybe it would spread. This is my hope and my inspiration.

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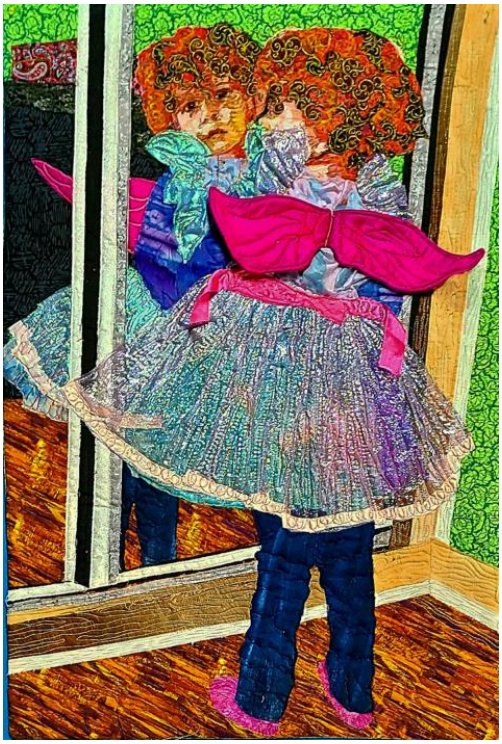
Phyllis Cullen

Ninole, Hawaii

Category: Joy

Grandma, Are My Wings on Straight?



Excitement! Anticipation! Getting dressed up in costume is one of the great joys of childhood.

My granddaughter designed her own costume and wanted it to be perfect!

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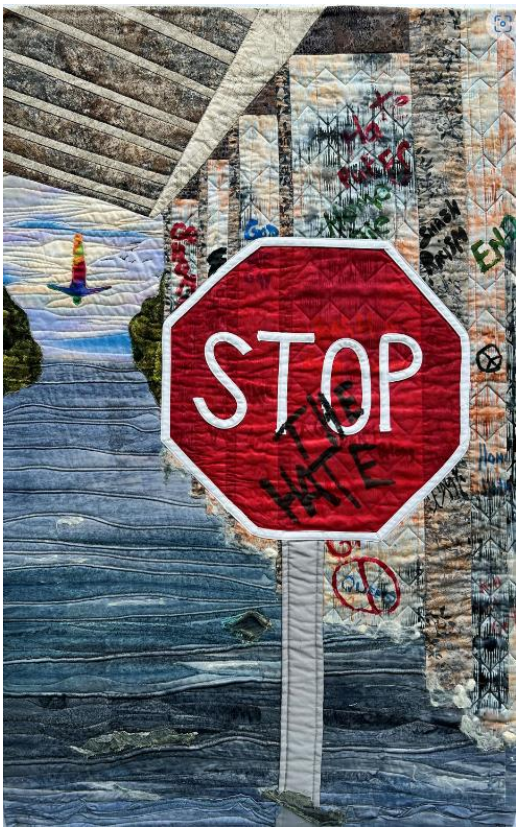
Polly Maynard

Warrenton, Virginia

Category: Grief

Tom's Bridge



The LGBTQ+ community is particularly vulnerable and a frequent target of physical, emotional, and verbal abuse. This quilt was made to honor my brother, who lived his life feeling as though he was valued as lesser because of his sexuality. Despite forward strides in public support, the rate of hate crime continues leading, often, to the alarmingly high number of suicides in this demographic. Equal rights remain elusive. My brother was an intelligent, sweet soul of a human and to know how he suffered is unbearable to me. To think of others continuing to suffer on a daily basis as a result of circumstances beyond their control, of their birth, is untenable. Instead of attempting to eliminate diversity we need to celebrate it!

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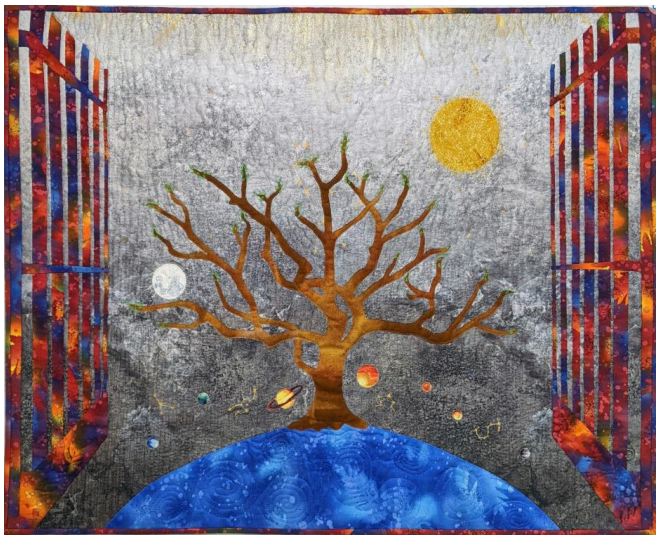
Shannon Dion

Portage, Michigan

Category: Spirituality

Gates of Dawn



The quilt is based on the Yotzer Or (Creator of Light) prayer said during Jewish morning services, celebrating God's creation of light. It was also inspired by a passage of commentary in the Etz Chaim Humash (printed Torah).

The commentary asks, "Why has light been such a favorite symbol of God? Perhaps because light itself cannot be seen. We become aware of its presence when it enables us to see other things. Similarly, we cannot see God, but we become aware of God's presence when we see the beauty of the world, when we experience the love and goodness of our fellow human beings..."

A portion of the prayer on the back of the quilt, in Hebrew and English, appears in the 2007 Edition of the Mishkan T'filah Reform prayer book.

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Gabriele DiTota

Melbourne, Florida

Category:
Peace/Brotherhood

There are times when all we need is to feel safe, secure, and sheltered. The news inundates us with images of women and children living in conflict zones. You see the fear in their eyes and it continues to haunt you long after the device you were watching is turned off. This piece represents a warm sheltering hug.

Sheltered

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Joanna Ellis

Parma, Ohio

Category:
Peace/Brotherhood

Window Games

Our family was visiting a museum when I looked over and saw my granddaughter playing a game with a little boy on the other side of the glass. Each mirrored the other's movements.

In the world today, it is increasing difficult to make a connection. But these two children managed to make a meaningful connection with no words, no directions from adults, just a spontaneous joyful connection that had no boundaries of space, color, or sex.

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Lynn Hanna

Loma Linda, California

Category: Inspiration

The Rock Will Wear Away

This quilt was inspired by a Holly Near song. "Can we be like drops of water falling on the ground? Splashing, breaking, dispersing in air
Weaker than the stone by far but be aware
That as time goes by the rock will wear away"

The verses describe a young girl, pregnant, facing single motherhood. Her choices are limited, her resources are few, and she struggles to put food on the table.

We all face challenges in our lives. With persistence and focus we can survive abusive relationships, invasive medical procedures, childhood trauma, and mental stresses. We can move mountains. When life feels overwhelming, remember what water can do to a rock. Be the water and never give up.

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Lisa Heller

Clyde, North Carolina

Category: Grief

Still Me:
Whole/Broken/Healing

This triptych represents a medical journey I endured.

It expresses the grief I felt over losing my good health, yet the hope that I would be healed.

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Maxine Hess

Woodstock, Georgia

Category:
Peace/Brotherhood

I've Been Prayin' For

I kept hearing this tune in my head. . . it was "One Day" by Matisyahu. Matisyahu is an American Jewish Reggae artist whose music blends the spiritual with Reggae. The lyrics captured me, especially the repetitive lines, "I've been prayin' for the people to say we don't wanna fight no more. There'll be no more wars and our children will play.

Stop with the violence, down with the hate." The world seems to be in such turmoil right now. To me the song asks for peace. I kept seeing an image of someone praying for peace. I didn't have a public photo of Matisyahu, so I asked my husband to pose for the portrait with his tallit (prayer shawl) and yarmulke (skull cap). Perhaps, we will have peace "One Day."

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Jeanne Hewell-Chambers

Saint Helena Island, South Carolina

"Hush up, Addie, I'm trying to sleep," Uncle John barked when my great aunt crawled back into bed after an 0-dark-thirty trip to the bathroom. When the sun came up, he woke to find a trail of blood linking Aunt Addie's side of the bed to the bathroom and the gun she used to try to kill herself. That afternoon, six men committed her to what was then called the insane asylum. Feeling embarrassed and fearing stigmatization by association, these pillars of the community didn't mention attempted suicide on her commitment papers. Instead, Aunt Addie was officially committed because "She talks too damn much." She spent the rest of her days doing what soothed her soul: reading the Bible, writing letters, and penning poems.

She Talked Too Damn Much

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Susanne Jones

Potamic Falls, Virginia

These are challenging times, anxiety-producing. We need reassurance. George Washington often quoted Micah 4:4, “Everyone will sit under their own vine and under their own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the LORD Almighty has spoken.” May it be so.

Inspired by my photo of a Mysore Fig Tree at the Edison and Ford Winter Estates, Fort Myers, Florida.

Category: Spirituality

Sit Under Your Own Fig Tree, Unafraid

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Patty Kennedy-Zafred

Murrysville, Pennsylvania

Category: Inspiration

Tagged

Barely three months after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, forcing into internment camps (euphemistically called War Relocation Centers) nearly 120,000 people of Japanese heritage living on the Pacific Coast, of which an estimated two-thirds were U.S. citizens. This piece is dedicated to the almost 30,000 camp internees who were children, many of whom, upon release, became exceptional adults, having survived this dark time in American history. (Original images courtesy Library of Congress and Bancroft Library, UC, Berkeley, with permission.) the underlying message the quilter tries to convey to the audience.

Stripes are unnatural lines that create solid boundaries and tangible separation. An historical depiction of simplicity within atrocity during the Holocaust. Every day, we are linked with unmatched connections to both global tragedy as well as triumphs.

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Anne Kobus

Cocoa Beach, Florida

Category: Joy

The Sunset Years

Reflecting on the ephemeral brilliance of a breathtaking sunset, I am reminded of the transient beauty of life's moments and am brought back to my mother's final years. Those years were a kaleidoscope of experiences and emotions from the vibrant warmth of joy to the melancholic depths of introspection. And as I approach those years myself, this sunset, captured during a family reunion at Lake Tahoe, reminds me of the beauty born from the acceptance of life's impermanence and the realization that every fleeting moment is a precious gift to be cherished.

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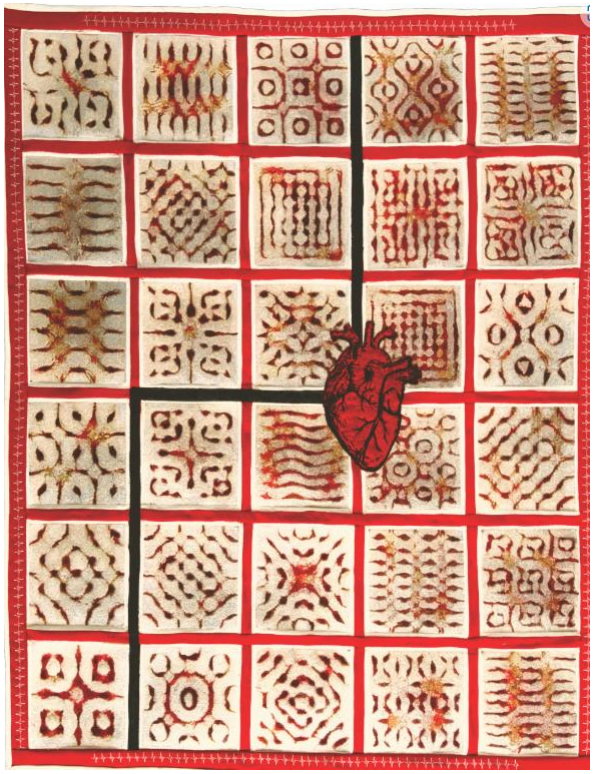
Karen Kuranda

Stamford, Vermont

Category: Healing

Healing Broken Hearts



As a scientist and quilter, I recently read a paper by Drs. Wu and Demirci of Stanford University. It discusses growing heart cells using different sound frequencies to influence the pattern that the cells grow in the lab. This is important to create replacement tissue that closely resembles the heart's natural structure.

Each panel in my quilt is an accurate depiction of a real experiment looking at how heart cells grow in culture with different sounds. Every stitch is an intimate connection to the profound harmony between science and the emotional tapestry within. I invite you to feel the healing wonder possible through cardiac tissue engineering and to listen to its healing music for the heart.

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Viviana Lombrozo

Category: Grief

San Diego, California

Please Save My Children

When I read in the paper that during the Russian war in Ukraine some Ukrainian parents send their children to school with their children's blood type and their parents information attached to their clothes, I couldn't stop thinking that this is one more of the horrible casualties of war.

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Karen Mendler

Windsor, Ontario Canada

Category: Inspiration

Hope

Pilgrims, with a diversity of inspirations, come from around the world to walk the Camino de Santiago. My motivation was the desire to find answers, to heal my brokenness. The challenges were many- the steepness of the terrain, the unrelenting sun on the Meseta, the noise of my thoughts overpowering the birdsong and the crunch of stones beneath my feet. The rewards of smiles, hugs and wishes for a Buen Camino were priceless. I came across a quote by najwa zebian, written on a rock in a small village- “these mountains that you are carrying, you were only supposed to climb”. This was an aha moment for me. I met many wonderful pilgrims on my journey, but the most significant one was a woman named Hope.

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Mary Ann Nailos

Cedar Park, Texas

Category: Joy

Jubilation

A studio tour turned into a pop-up wedding, blurring the boundary between guest and random strangers.

At the end of the ceremony, we all threw up our hands and shouted YAY into the universe. Everyone there signed the marriage certificate and ate cake.

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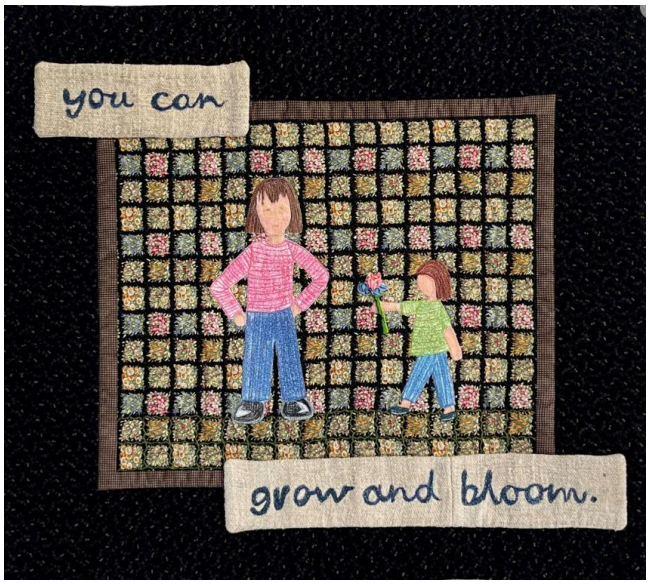
Becky Navarro

Sugar Land, Texas

Category: Healing

Hope



Hope can die suddenly. It can remain gone for days, months, or years. Dying did that for me. A cardiac arrest is a death from which most do not survive unscathed. I did survive without disability. I moved on, pushed through it. Finding a scrap of floral fabric gave me hope. Hope I could grow beyond the limitations that others were forcing upon me.

It allowed me to nurture the person I am. To expand my horizons to an unexpected place. To become a stronger, more creative person than before the incident. By creating one quilt that inspired me, I moved beyond others' perceptions into a hope-filled future.

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Stefanie Neuner

Summerville, South Carolina

Category: Healing

Prescribed

The quilt "Prescribed" is about the medical side of autism. When typical people go to the doctor, the physician usually asks a battery of questions. For example, what brings you here today? Is the medication I prescribed helping with your symptoms? A profoundly autistic child is not able to discuss how they are feeling or why they are acting out. Often autistic individuals are given an assortment of medication to help with the fact that they are unable to communicate their wants and needs. These drugs range from anti-anxiety, mood stabilization, and any other symptom of autism. Parents are often asked, what do you think about this medication or that medication? These questions are very hard to determine as a parent.

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Dij Pacarro

Melbourne, Florida

Category: Healing

Reaching Beyond The Pain

I had back surgery in 2020, which didn't go well. I ended up with more pain, that is still with me. Add to that the pandemic, which was pretty depressing. I didn't feel like creating, but I challenged myself to just push through the pain.

The quilt started out with dark log cabin blocks, the only thing I felt I could deal with. But as I kept making those boring blocks, I knew I needed to break out of tha dark place I was in. I reached toward my favorite bright colors, using improv piecing.

The figure is me, and the crooked spine isn't exaggerated. The hand embroidered "X's" depict the pain. I'm reaching toward the bright colors of my future, as I channel my pain and acceptance into art and healing.

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Phyllis Petrillo

Port St. Lucie, Florida

Category: Inspiration

Breathe

My quilt has inspired me to express the importance and power of breathing and our chakras.

I use the breathing technique all the time while driving in the chaotic traffic and just take a moment and breathe in and breathe out and it settles me. I enjoy walking in the woods, and feel trees are our connection to mother-earth, with her deep roots to ground us. I simply, pay attention, take a moment go somewhere private, and take a deep breathe.

This quilt also symbolizes the importance of our chakras. I believe the chakras helps the energy flow through our bodies and into the universe, creating a state of connection and well-being. I hope when viewers see my quilt, they will feel the sense of tranquility and peacefulness.

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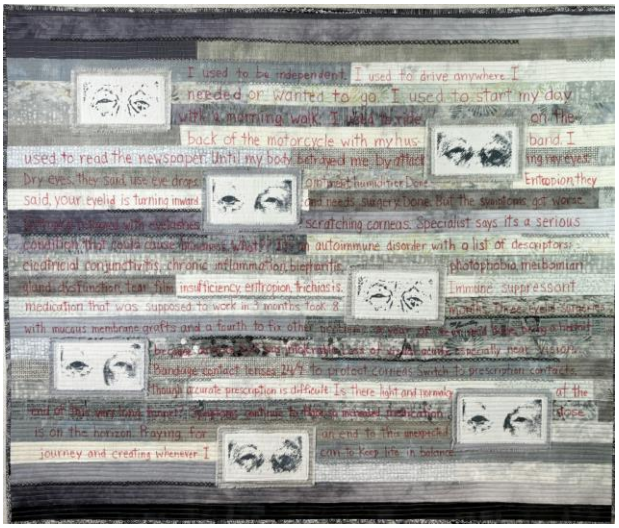
Susan Price

Springfield, Virginia

Category: Healing

Insight



After several years of treatment for dry eye, I was diagnosed with an autoimmune disorder that caused my body to attack my eyes. “Insight” is the story of my journey through treatment which is still ongoing. From severely impacted vision, 5 eyelid surgeries, various contact lenses, myriad medications and on to slow improvement, continuing to create has been an outlet for grief at what has been lost as well as a source of hope for eventual recovery. The screen prints are adapted from selfies and the raw edge strips echo the rawness of emotions. The cross stitches hold the edges together, just as the surgeon cut and stitched my eyelids. Working on “Insight” has been a healing journey.

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Luana Rubin

Boulder, Colorado

Category:
Peace/Brotherhood

The Children of War

Over the past two years we have prayed for peace, for war-ravaged countries like Ukraine. More recently the Gaza-Israel conflict has broken our hearts, especially because of the death, injuries and upheaval that has destroyed the lives of children and families. These conflicts have caused millions of refugees to live in constant stress and desperate poverty. The same conditions affect children in war zones elsewhere, including Sudan and Yemen. These children are not 'other' people's children. These children belong to all of us. They are the future of the world. A child starving in the rubble of Gaza is as precious and sacred in the eyes of God as any of our own children. Their mothers pray for their safety just as we would for our own.

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Kate Schneider-Braus

Middleton, Wisconsin

Category: Spirituality

Veiled Woman

I am drawn towards artwork that depicts women in veils. The burka, of course, most completely hides the woman's form. But all veils are in some way designed to keep a woman hidden. Bridal veils, Catholic nuns' veils, hijabs, niqabs, and even the dance of the seven veils are customs that keep the woman's body covered. Why? Where do these customs originate? What does it say about a culture in which the woman is forced to wear a veil? Why do some women choose it?

Having spent four years in a Catholic convent, this practice of wearing the veil intrigues me. I aspire to complete a larger "Study in Veils" using multiple art forms in the future.

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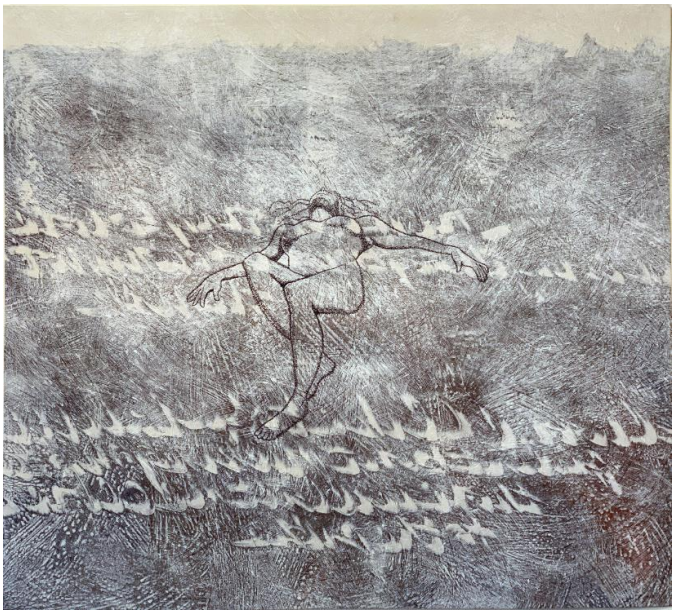
Jeanne Sisson

Northfield, Massachusetts

Category:
Peace/Brotherhood

Breathe



When I was 5 my parents signed me up for swimming lessons where I learned to turn onto my back and float. I have always been good at it. Now, years later, I spend summers on a beautiful lake. During my daily swims, my favorite thing to do is float. Surrounded by the cool crystal water, buoyant and almost weightless, with my ears submerged, noises are muffled. Things become distant. Thoughts recede. The bubbling sound of water and my breath is all I hear, disappearing from reality for a while.

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Sheryl St. Germain

Savannah, Georgia

Category: Healing

A Mother Who Loves Books

My mother, who loved books, died two years ago. It was because of her love of books that I became a writer. We had a complex relationship that wasn't always positive, but after she died I missed her dearly. In this surface design quilt I worked to create a golden color that echoed the old, yellowed page of a book.

I used crumpled parchment dipped in dye to give it texture. I created a thermofax using my name and hers, written on top of each other, that I screened down the middle of the piece. I used a needle-tipped bottle to write a poem I'd composed for her down either side of the quilt. The raw edges suggest our sometimes raw relationship, and the pleat in the middle the way we finally came together to make something new.

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Heather Stoltz

Harrison, New York

My nephew is 17 years old, driving and thinking about college. But when he was in first grade at Sandy Hook Elementary, one person with a semi-automatic rifle ended the possibility of a bright future for 20 of his classmates and six of the adults trying to keep them safe. Those six- and seven-year-olds should be 17 and 18 today. Instead of driving and thinking about the future, they are forever frozen in the past, having never made it past the days of playing with toy cars.

In this piece, the 20 broken toy cars represent the 20 children killed that day and the six red lines represent the adults who died trying to protect them. There are 1,000 stitches that make up those lines, one for each shooting on school grounds in the ten years after.

Ten Years Later

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Paula Straw

Montrose, Colorado

Category:
Peace/Brotherhood

Innocents

The young Jewish Schonfeld brothers pose hand in hand. The Star of David sewn to their clothing bears a sense of foreboding. In their rural Hungarian town, antisemitic laws forbid them to attend a school or sit on a park bench. Their father's business was closed and he was forced into slave labor. These boys witnessed unimaginable cruelties. Fear became part of their lives. In the summer of 1944, these brothers along with their mother, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins were transported in boxcars to Auschwitz. They were all murdered there. In the words of Imre Kertész, Nobel Laureate and Auschwitz survivor: "It should never happen to another child."

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Larkin Jean Van Horn

Port Hadlock, Washington

Category: Spirituality

Walking Meditation

The triple Celtic spiral labyrinth is unique, in that you can step into the labyrinth at any point and by walking around all three wings will return to where you started.

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Marijke van Welzen

Vlaardingen, Netherlands

Category: Spirituality

Whispers on the Wind

A gentle breeze can bring us seeds that grow into beautiful wildflowers or a bird's feather suddenly floating across our path.

It brings us messages from the spirit world and will tell about prophecy and insight.

Listen to the whispers on the wind.

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Maggie Venderweit

Guelph, Ontario Canada

Category: Spirituality

Spirit Chairs – Blue Welcome

A chair can be a symbol of welcome and belonging, of memory and heritage, of grief and celebration. It holds a place for those not present, and waits for their return.

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Christine Vinh

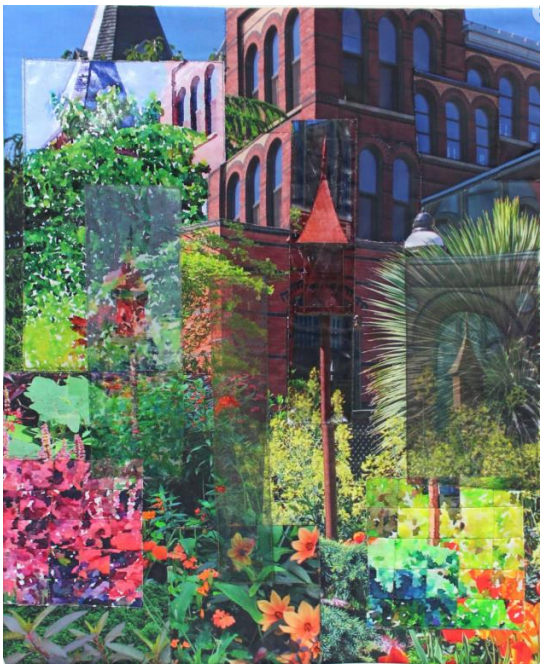
Arlington, Virginia

Category: Inspiration

During the pandemic I took many solo walks in nearby Washington, DC. The Smithsonian Gardens were a frequent starting place which always included a walk through the Mary Livingston Ripley Garden, a small informal garden next to the Arts and Industries Building.

The garden was a source of calm and inspiration during these walks . The photos I chose for this piece focused on the birdhouse in the center of the garden during the seasons.

A Quiet Oasis



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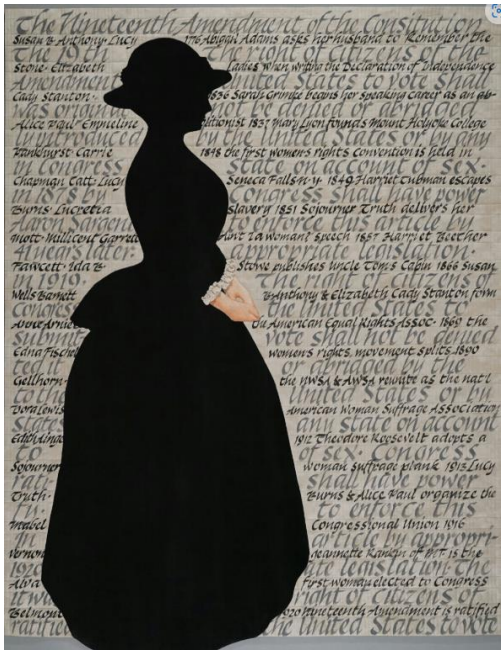
Hope Wilmarth

Houston, Texas

Category: Inspiration

Tour de Force



History is important to me, thus I chose to write it as my celebration of the 100th year of women's suffrage.

I especially hope the words on the quilt will be read by my grandchildren who have a legacy of strong, independent women in their DNA as role models.

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