

Bits and Pieces

Newsletter

March 2013



Next Meeting



March 18, 2013 – Mary Morrison *The GOLDEN “A to Z” of Acrylics*

Innovation and new technology are changing the options for ACRYLIC art exploration!

This lecture packs in a ton of valuable information about acrylics, guiding listeners through the basics while opening up new possibilities. Gain information about mineral and modern pigments and how this relates to clean color mixing, glazing and the creation of fabulous new colors. Learn the unique properties of Fluids, Heavy Body, and the OPEN acrylics. Discover Interference and Iridescent paints for unusual effects.

Get a grip on the many gels and mediums and how they can change texture, saturation and intensity of color, used for sculptural effects and more. Check out the amazing new grounds to prepare truly, contemporary surfaces for painting, drawing, pastel, digital printing and mixed media. Discover how acrylics can simulate oil and watercolor, even gouache, yet are infinitely more versatile.

FRCQ meetings are held at the Westminster City Recreation Center at 7:00 PM.

If an FRCQ meeting is cancelled due to inclement weather, a notice will be posted on the website at <http://www.artquilters.org>

President's Letter

Our first really significant snow fall is beautifully displayed through my window. It is easy to stay in and work and just enjoy the beauty from my loft 3 stories up above the ice on the streets. I am not stretching my analogies too far when I compare the development of an art piece to my conflicted view on winter weather. I can choose to dive into the snow and ice and just dress warmly and make sure my car is adequately prepared. Or, I can safely stay in and look out the window.



When I am developing a new piece of art work it just has to be the delving right in technique and go through the struggles of getting an idea to come together. I can't stand back and hope it develops. Truthfully I have been avoiding starting a new piece because my last piece is still on the wall languishing. I know it is not one of my best pieces, but is there something that can be done to improve it?

This is where having a critique group is so important. I belong to two groups and attend another one as often as possible. One of my critique groups has been around for a long time and I am the new kid on the block. It is hard to become part of a long established group with years of history a long established friendships. Everyone is a really experienced artist and offers good advice. I really appreciate the members of the group being willing to point out problems and offer suggestions. I try to do the same thing when another member offers new work.

The newer critique group was established when Melody Randal helped coordinate the forming of new groups. We have a group of diverse artists; two painters, a person who does exquisite beading, another artist does surface design with dyes but never quilts, and another person who also does weaving. Again the feedback on my work is invaluable. Our group has not met for several months; I miss it and certainly could use fresh eyes on my piece called "Divided" which is waiting for some great "aha" moment.

SDA has also formed a group that meets once a month in central Denver on Saturday morning. I was able to attend once and plan on going in the future when I can. The group is facilitated by Kristi Baca and the feedback to the artists was valuable and thoughtful. If you are interested, you can contact Kristi at Kristi.baca@gmail.com.

If you want to start a group that will grow and develop strong and trusting relationships why not take the first step? Just know that forming a group takes time and commitment from the members. I promise you it is worth it (see ***New Critique Groups Forming on page 4***).

There are numerous articles on SAQA on guidelines for a group. Some groups are more ambitious and coordinate member shows in a local venue. Each group will develop and grow and the mutually decided upon guidelines will rule it. I assure you that if you invest the time into forming a group, you will grow in your artistic endeavors.

Bits and Pieces is the monthly newsletter of the Front Range Contemporary Quilters. Submission of art quilt related articles from members is welcomed. The editor and the Board reserve the right to edit for length, content and space. Deadline for submissions to the newsletter is the Thursday following the monthly meeting. Email articles and items for submission to the publication to: Moira Mallison news@frcq.org

Advertising Policy:

Classes offered by members are printed for free in the section called "Member Classes"; business cards of members or businesses with services of interest to our members are printed for (3-1/2"x2") \$5 per issue; 1/4 page (3-1/2"x4-3/4"), \$20.00 per issue; 1/2 page (7-1/2" x 4-3/4"), \$40.00 per issue; full page (7-1/2"x9-3/4"), \$80.00 per issue. All advertising should be submitted along with payment to the newsletter editor by the deadline. Contact Moira at news@frcq.org for payment address.

Bits and Pieces is a benefit of membership in Front Range Contemporary Quilters and is not available by subscription. Membership in FRCQ is \$30 per year, due and payable January 1 of each year. Dues may be sent to membership chair.

FRCQ, Attn: Membership
P.O. Box 351551
Westminster, CO 80035-3551

Change of Address:

Please notify membership chair, Ellen Nepustil, for any change of address. members@frcq.org

2013-2014 Board Members

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(303) 596-4685	president@frcq.org
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“The Nigerian Princes” ~ Mary McCauley

You know it's a classic scam when a Nigerian Prince sends you an email asking you to help him get millions of dollars out of Africa. So just what are the Nigerian Princes up to now that we're on to them?

When my own critique group of 11 fiber artists recently shared that 3 of us have been the recent target of scammers, I figured it's time to get the word out. The Princes are getting very good at targeting individuals and sole proprietor, small businesses, peppering their emails with lots of inside terms and references, and relying on a group's culture of trust and cooperation. Fiber Artists BEWARE! At least a few scammers have us targeted as naïve artists who are inexperienced at international sales.

Here's a typical example. It usually starts with an email. Maybe it's from an art broker for a Chinese importer. They represent very wealthy Chinese who are looking to purchase Western art for their private collections. Of course, your name and work are of interest to them! They might mention interest in fiber art, American quilt art, and cite well known quilt exhibitions, or even your website and names of works in your gallery. Wow, you think, an opportunity to get your work known in the huge Chinese market of wealthy entrepreneurs! ...Not so fast.

Your Chinese broker (the foreign identity is why you don't worry that their English grammar is less than perfect) is ready to buy your work right now, but there is a small complication. Maybe they are moving their business, are out of the country now, or some other reason that means they have to ask you to use their shipping service, or to deliver your work to an intermediary, or give it to their personal agent who will come pick it up. Maybe they have sent you a check, but it is made out for way too much money, so you have to send them a check for the overage – they trust you.

Wait a minute. You'd better check them out. You do an online search of their business name, or the shipping warehouse to which you should send your art, or the bank for the check you received. They have a website, logo, and everything. You're safe, right? ...Not so fast.

If you actually contact the bank, you'll be transferred to their fraud department who will inform you that their checks have been stolen and they are investigating the crimes in which the checks are now

appearing. Or the warehouse, if they exist, has never heard of the broker you name, and by the way, they have moved to a new address. Or the Better Business Bureau recognizes that business name as a “shell” business. By the time you hang up the phone, their huge check has bounced at your bank. Good thing you didn't actually send them a refund, right? Or shipped your art, right? Right?

The Princes are a clever lot with plenty of variations on this theme. Has an overseas quilt exhibit (or a “vanity gallery”) contacted you to ask you to send some of your art, maybe even naming specific works? They tell you where to ship your work. Then sadly, they contact you with news that your shipment is held up in customs. Maybe they ask you to reimburse them for some import fee or gallery fee. Maybe you don't hear anything more, for a long, long time. When the alleged exhibit dates have come and gone, your art is nowhere to be found, and neither are the exhibit contacts.

Perhaps you have a fiber art or quilt business and have received a very large order for goods from a buyer in another country who is willing to pay in full up front. They ask you to use their personal shipping service, not UPS or FedEx. Again, they send you a check for payment, but it is for too much money. No problem, just send them a refund check – they provide lots of information about money transfer services in your own neighborhood who can send your refund very quickly. They trust you.

Don't be embarrassed if you didn't immediately see through these scams, or you answered their initial emails, or maybe, sadly, you even lost money or art. It happens. We are a trusting group, used to believing each other and being supportive. And everyone wants to think that their art has been discovered and valued. The scammers depend on all this to pull off their deceptions. And they depend on us to be too embarrassed to tell others what happened. ...Not so fast.

At your next critique group meeting, bring up this topic. If you have had such an experience, write an article about it for your guild's newsletter. If you still have copies of those dodgy emails, print one out and bring it to your group's Show and Tell, and then tell them all what to look out for – they will trust you. Don't be embarrassed when you can help others recognize these scams before somebody gets hurt. Put the Princes out of work.

Artist Opportunities

New Critique Groups Forming

Colleen Baumann is helping coordinate the forming of new critique groups. Remember a group can include all types of artists, weavers, surface design artists, beaders, painters, mixed media, all types of fiber artists and of course quilters. Sign-up sheets, based upon geographic regions will be available at the membership table at the March meeting.

If you have to miss the March meeting you can email Colleen , cmbaumann@hotmail.com, to tell her of your interest. Please mention your geographical area and if you prefer a night time group or day time. Maybe groups can come early to the April or May FRCQ meeting and try the first stage of forming.

Summerfest

Center for the Arts Evergreen
July 20th & 21st, 2013, 10am-5pm
Deadline: March 18th (postmark)

Summerfest is a two-day festival held outdoors in Evergreen, CO, which historically draws about 5,000 attendees. Summerfest kicks off Arts Alive Evergreen, a 10-day showcase event featuring the best of Evergreen's visual and performing arts. This collaboration allows us to attract more visitors from all over the Denver Metro Area.

Summerfest features a fabulous selection of gallery quality fine art and fine crafts chosen by a jury process, a children's area to engage the younger visitors, performances by local favorites and star performers to add to the festival spirit, and a Beer & Wine Garden to compliment the wonderful food selection. Summerfest is known for its beautiful mountain setting, bringing in a dedicated art buying crowd, and offering the best support services for our artist vendors.

For more information and to apply, visit <http://www.evergreenarts.org/Summerfest.html>

Exploration of a Medium: Fiber

Center for the Arts Evergreen

June 28 – August 1, 2013
Deadline: March 18th (postmark)
Juror: Carmon Slater

The Center for the Arts Evergreen is proud to present *Exploration of a Medium: Fiber*, our fourth exhibition devoted to exploring a single art medium. Acceptable fiber art techniques include sewing, quilting, knitting, embroidery, weaving, basketry, and mixed media fibers, both traditional and contemporary techniques, utilitarian and fine art objects. For more information and it apply, visit http://www.evergreenarts.org/forms/CallforArtists_fibershow2013.pdf

The Book as Art: 21st Century Meets Tradition

Decatur Arts Alliance and The Art Institute of Atlanta-Decatur
July 19 – September 20, 2013
Deadline: June 3, 2013

Artists' books take many forms – from handmade and lusciously tactile to linear and informative; abstract and questioning to sculptural and monumental. Artists' books can be a delight to the eye, a pleasure to the hand, and made tangible in forms that introduce us not only to new interpretations of an ancient concept but also to questions and ideas on 21st – century form and format. Artists who observe this world and interpret the IDEA of the book are invited to enter a juried exhibition that visually celebrates the book form.

A Call for Artists with details on entry is available at www.decaturartsalliance.org/blog and The Art Institute of Atlanta-Decatur website www.artinstitutes.edu/atlanta-decatur. Cash awards are offered. Entries will be accepted online at callforentry.org.

Take Great Photos of Your Art ~ Linda Strand

Here is my process for getting the best picture possible without hiring a professional photographer. It works for wall-hung art, if you are working with 3D or wearable art, it's a far more complex process. Photos of 3D work need well-placed shadows to show the character of the piece and are very difficult to get without an extensive and controllable light set-up.

Remember, you have spent countless hours producing your art. It is worth spending a couple of hours recording your art accurately, giving a juror the best image possible.

A list of essentials: (This is the list we talked about in the first article – and yes you need all of these things.)

- A great camera (a good camera is fine) that shoots at 300 dpi (not 180, not 72, not 230).
- A camera manual
- A tripod
- Controllable light set-up. (I'll give you a workable alternative for this one)
- A good computer with an excellent monitor.
- Image editing software. (Corel Paintshop Pro, Adobe Photoshop Elements, and Serif Photo Plus all have good ratings and are all under \$100.)

1. Find or create a wall that is slightly larger than the art and is a neutral (light gray, white, beige or black) color or where you can hang a piece of cloth that is a neutral color. If a cloth background is used, iron the fabric. If you are shooting indoors with lights, you need enough floor space to move the lights and light reflecting panels into the proper place. If you are shooting outdoors, your wall will need fairly direct diffused sun onto the art.

2. Hang the art so the center of the art is the same height as the camera lens and allow for 3" or 4" of neutral background around the outside edge of the art. The art needs to hang freely and flat against the wall, it shouldn't be wrinkled or have folded edges.

3. Read the camera manual and learn what the various settings do. Learn how to set the white balance.

4. Set up your tripod and camera so that the art fills the lens with neutral background around all edges. The photo must include all edges of the piece – this is important for the juror and essential if the photo will be used for print. The art must be directly in front of the camera lens, square to the edges of the lens opening. If the lens is not centered and square to the camera, the true shape and dimension of the art won't show in the photo.

5. Figure out the lighting. Look at the center of the piece and make sure that each corner has the same amount of lighting as the center of the piece. The lighting needs to be bright enough to highlight the stitching and all the colors that you have included in the art. The light needs to be even and bright.

This can be done with a collection of lights, shining on the artwork, positioning white boards (foam core works) or foil-covered boards to reflect additional light onto the piece. It can also be done outdoors on a bright but cloudy day. Shoot on a day where shadows are minimal and are diffused, not sharply defined. Bright sun will burn out colors and create some inappropriate shadows.

6. Set the white balance using the light source to be used for the photo.

7. Take one photo and check the small screen on the camera. Is there background around all edges of your art? Is the entire piece shown on the screen? Is the lighting equal across the entire piece? Are all edges illuminated? Is the color correct? Does the image look like the real thing? If not, make the necessary changes to the setup. If the answer is yes, go to step 8.

8. Take at least 10 photos of the full piece of artwork. Change the settings with every shot. Shoot at the auto setting, the landscape setting, the portrait setting, the close-up setting. Shoot with a flash and without a flash. (In the photo world they call this "bracketing". A professional photographer will change the speed and lighting settings on the camera. Your camera does this same thing as you change the pre-set picture modes.) Take another 10 (minimum) shots of

the section of the art chosen to feature in the detail photo. Most entries will require a full and a detail photograph of the art.

9. Load the photos onto your computer, load your image software and open the photos. Now it's just a matter of finding the best of the photos.

- Does the photo show all edges of the art?
- Is the lighting spread evenly across the art?
- Are the colors accurate?
- Is it in focus? Is it in focus when you zoom in? Zoom in to the point where the portion of the image you are using is the same size as the real piece. The juror will do this so they can look at your colors, stitch, design details.

If none of the photos achieve all of these criteria, go back to step 1.

10. Save the best overall and best detail photo in an archive file. Always keep this photo archived, it is your permanent record of your work.

Figure out some way to label these photos so you will always keep them clean. Every time you load, change and re-save a .jpg, you lose information from the photo. I label mine with a big "O" at the end of the file name – so bigpoppyfullO.jpg or bigpoppydetailO.jpg. I keep them in a separate file.

11. Make a copy of the record photos and label them as copies. You'll work on adjustments from these copies. Do NOT use your record photos for adjustments.

12. No matter how good a photo you take, you can and will probably need to improve it with your image software. Typically you'll need to brighten the photo, crop out excess background, and change the image size to meet the requirements of the call for entry. Save this file using the protocol required by the call for entry.

Hooray – you now have a great photo! You have put as much effort into the photo that will be viewed by the juror, put on your website or published in a book as you did into your wonderful art.

Foothills Art Center July 9 – August 23, 2013
Theme: Fantasy
Juror – Ann Johnston
Postmark deadline – May 3, 2013 (Call for Entry)

Imagination, especially when extravagant and unrestrained; the forming of mental images, especially wondrous or strange fancies; a mental *image*, especially when unreal or *fantastic*; a *vision* or daydream. This exhibit offers the opportunity for artists to travel into their imagination, creating art that reveals a fantasy. Whether that fantasy is using a new color or technique or creates a picture of a wondrous thought or journey.

The exhibit is open to fiber artists, art must be “a creative visual work that is layered and stitched or that references this form of stitched layered structure.” Maximum width of entered work is 54”, height is limited to 84”.

Juror: First, Ann learned to sew; then she learned to dye fabric. Ann's years of experimentation with dye and fabric have led to piles of quilts, worldwide travel, numerous shows and exhibitions, five books, and not a few aches and pains. Her collectors respect her viewpoint and her students admire her generosity and skill in teaching what she knows. For more information about Ann, see her [resume](#), and look at excerpts from her books: *The Quilter's Book of Design*, Second Edition (2008) *Speaking in Cloth, 6 Quilters, 6 Voices* (2006), *Color by Design: Paint and Print with Dye* (2001), *Color By Accident: Low Water Immersion Dyeing* (1997), and *Dye Painting!* (1992).

For details about this and other FRCQ Exhibit opportunities visit the [Exhibits page](#) on our website.

St. Patrick's Day Sale

March 15, 16 & 17

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Bits & Pieces from Members

Regina Benson to speak on Special Artist Panel:

Saturday, March 9: 1:30-4pm

1:30pm Cash Bar

2-3:30pm Artist Panel Discussion

3:30-4pm Mingle with the Artists

Free admission, refreshments and cash bar

"Art of the State" Arvada Center

6901 Wadsworth Blvd, Arvada, CO

www.arvadacenter.org

2013 FRCQ Membership Information

Our 2013 membership drive is in full swing! Mail your registration form and \$30 to the address below

2013 FRCQ Membership Form	
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY	
Mail to: FRCQ, PO Box 351551, Westminster, CO 80035-1551	
Date: _____	EARLY BIRD DUES (Before Dec. 31, 2012) are \$25 DUES are \$30
____ CASH ____ CHECK ____ RENEWING MEMBER ____ NEW MEMBER	
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A link to the PDF of each month's Newsletter will be delivered via email to paid FRCQ members and may be downloaded and printed at home.	