

# THE CRAFT FACTOR

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## The Craft Factor

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Winner of Henry N.R. Jackman Foundation award Best in the Show, by Don Taylor.



# The Lives of Objects

BY SANDRA FLOOD

*"Absently she put her hand to her throat and touched the emerald pendant that hung in her cleavage. Emeralds sure know how to live."*

Les Roberts, *Snake Oil*

The idea of an object living its own independent life is an intriguing one, yet it must be one which occurs at some time to every craftsman. Like children, chairs, vessels, necklaces, tapestries are conceived, brought forth, and launched into the world. And like children, objects are not passive in their impact; they come into our lives changing our habits, provoking emotions, trailing social messages. The handmade sweater we hand wash although absolutely every other piece of clothing is flung into the washing machine; the teapot whose dripping spout necessitates buying a plastic spout guard or standing it on a mat, or even relegating it to the display shelf: almost without thought, we accommodate objects. The glass given by a friend, selected as a souvenir, the last of a set, perfect for holding small flowers, is loaded with personal significance, or memories, or reoccurring delight (or irritation). Objects dictate to us how we relate to them: the high-back wooden dining chair does not permit sprawling; the bowl's evident fragility ensures it is handled with care.

Our lives are governed by the objects surrounding us, not only in small ways but in major ways. Think of television: the layout of furniture in the living room changes from enabling interaction with other people to focusing on a flickering box, and with it changes social patterns as people turn from being interactive generators of talk and entertainment to passive receptors. Consider refrigerators: buying food goes from a daily occurrence to a weekly or even monthly occurrence; a variety of small, individually-owned shops within easy walking distance become corporately owned, impersonal mega-markets in three locations on the outskirts of the town, with all the ramifications that that has for transport, agribusiness, consumer choice or lack of it, municipal legislation, and food preparation. The refrigerator grumbles and whines in a corner of the once-silent kitchen. Consider how the car has irrevocably altered our lives, our cities, our countryside, our sense of mobil-

ity, distance, and access. Our clothes, footwear, jewellery affect where we go, how we move, what we do. A woman in a corset, bustle, and voluminous petticoats walks differently, sits differently, experiences her body differently, thinks differently than a woman in shorts and a halter top. Imagine your male work colleagues in standard three-piece suits, plain white shirts, discreet striped ties, and high-heeled court shoes. What profound changes in the psyche have taken place. The last time men wore high heels they also wore stockings, britches, lace, embroidered waistcoats, silks and velvets, and wigs of long curls—how did these affect stance, activity, self-image?

**Like people, objects can be foreign, enigmatic, silent. They may literally come from another culture, their use, context, and significance unknown to us.**

We are provoked into constantly thinking of how objects must be treated and used, how they need to be held or placed, what must be done to maintain them. Objects invite us to know them. We learn them through eyes, bodies, and primarily hands, for the hands always expand (and sometimes contradict) the information received by the eyes. By touching and using objects, we learn their size, their weight, their ease of handling or their awkwardness, their texture and tactility, their sturdiness or fragility, their rigidity or suppleness.

Objects also carry social messages. Who wears emeralds? Women only or men also? If men are wearing emeralds, where about their body do they wear them and when; what does the wearing of emeralds say about the wearer's nationality and status. When "she put her hand to her throat and touched the emerald pendant," we immediately think of the stone cut and polished, symmetrically shaped and smoothed to display its rich, rare, translucent colour and mounted in a worked precious-metal setting to enhance and add value to the stone, signifying affluence and taste, redolent of elegant society

evenings rather than the work-a-day world. If, however, the pendant was raw emerald crystals on a thong, the picture immediately changes, the wearer becoming perhaps a bohemian or an aboriginal.

In choosing whether to drink coffee from a cup and saucer or a mug, differences in place, ambience, occasion, time, and social behaviour are called into play. In this dialogue between object and user, shape, size, material, and decoration all signal social convention, that constantly shifting blend of use and history. Consider the tiny *demi-tasse* for *espresso*, the peasant bowl for *café au lait*, the mug for that early morning brew, or the invariably ugly, plastic, lidded thermal mug that allows a constant sucking at warm coffee along the street, in the car, at the workbench, anywhere but seated at a table, an adult successor to the child's comfort bottle. Messages of taste, education, social aspiration, and philosophy are reflected in the choices between a handmade pottery mug, an English bone china mug, or a Taiwanese ceramic mug, and are mirrored in their different decoration.

For the most part, the social messages given by an object are generally understood. The different messages given by a Honda and a Porsche are clear, as are the messages from a mass-produced, cast drinking glass and one of Waterford crystal. However, the distinctive subtleties conferred by ownership of glass by Bonny Houston or Steven Newell or Sam Herman may only be known to a small group of people. Within our polyglot society, the meanings of objects can shift, change, convey limited information, detailed information, or baffle, depending on the company they keep.

If the social meanings of objects leave some room for negotiation, their personal meanings are often more enigmatic. The colours of woven silk scarves may for the maker have been inspired by streaked and dappled apples but may talk to the owner of sunsets and firelight; the colours may have been inspired by the fall prairie landscape but may say to the owner only that they go perfectly with her new coat and enhance her complexion. Whatever the signals given to other people by the objects we each choose to surround ourselves with, the objects also speak to us their personal messages. Do Judy Tryon's faceted, partially unglazed, brown-and-cream marbled pottery mugs speak to other owners as they do to me of the

early nineteenth-century industrial pottery-making English Midlands, from whose grim towns of row houses and smoking kilns set in a lush green countryside emerged domestic objects which have a lively spare elegance, industrial production still warmed by the rustic. Do they speak to the maker of such things?

Like people, objects can be foreign, enigmatic, silent. They may literally come from another culture, their use, context, and significance unknown to us. Despite their foreignness, they may be accepted because they fill a technological, psychological, or cultural niche; or they may be discounted as merely a curiosity. Even within our own culture, there are objects whose purpose, value and message may mystify, such as the specialist tools used by surgeons, engineers or craftspeople, or the paintings of the Abstract Expressionists, or Bonny Houston's "talking sticks," wands of variously coloured glass blobs and flanges. There are also objects which are silent; through shifts in taste and fashion, they no longer speak. The Apollo Belvedere, for more than three hundred and fifty years the most admired sculpture in the Western world, languishes almost unvisited in the Vatican's Museo Pio-Clemente, a victim of the reappraisal of Greco-Roman sculpture which followed the nineteenth-century revelation of original Greek sculptures of an earlier period, such as the Elgin Marbles.

Like a person, the made object has a history, independent of the maker, maybe taking it through many partners, finding itself in varied situations, in different roles. Imagine a pieced quilt made in the 1880's by a group of women in a small Ontario town. The quilt is made of blocks of embroidered or appliqued flower baskets and includes the names of the makers. The fabric is leftovers from the making of summer dresses. The quilt is pieced through gossipy winter afternoons as a gift for a young bride. Some months after the wedding the quilt is packed with other precious domestic articles for the long journey to the Canadian prairies. With its silks, satins and glazed cottons, the quilt is too fine to be used for everyday, it is certainly too fine for a sod house, so for much of its early life it is packed away and used only for best. In the 1930's, the quilt accompanies the daughter's household to one of the larger Prairie cities, where although it retains its sentimental value as a memento of her mother and her Ontario ancestry, it is rarely used in an upwardly-mobile urban family that wishes to forget a generation of hardscrabble farming. In the 1960's, a granddaughter clearing out her deceased mother's house finds the



ABOVE Handmade quilt (c.1880's), Wedding gift to Eliza Durnin and James Agar. Donated to the Western Development Museum by granddaughter, Kay Brown. (As the quilt was brought to the Prairies in 1910, its history parallels that of the imaginary quilt as described below.) Photo by Garry Hayes.

quilt packed in a trunk with her mother's wedding dress. Some of the silks are a little brittle, most of the fabrics are almost as bright as when first pieced, the stitchery is of variable skill, but the design is relatively unusual and has a lively charm, and its history of ownership and origin are known. The quilt is acquired by a discriminating collector who in the 1970's gives her collection to a major museum. Over the next 20 years, the museum occasionally exhibits the quilt—on a bed in a "pioneer room," with other nineteenth-century examples of women's handicrafts, with quilts by contemporary artists.

The quilt in its long history has provided an excuse for social gathering and the reinforcement of female support networks; it was an outlet for the impulse to beautify, exhibit skill, and exercise domestic economy. It has acted as a conveyer of affection and friendship, as a memento of distant friends and homeplace, as a functional bedcover, an object conveying pride of ownership and conferring status, a treasured family heirloom, a collectable, a historical artifact, an exemplar of late nineteenth century traditional textile craft, as folk art and as fine art. It started with little monetary value but gained relatively high monetary value because of its longevity, condition, history, distinctiveness, and assigned cultural importance. It had to begin with only a personal, sentimental, subjective value (its significance for the makers and the owner), but as the quilt moved to other owners these ties

were lost and it gradually acquired a public, symbolic, objective value as an example of a heritage quilt. Location has played its part in all this. As the quilt moved from its traditional functional role as a bed covering in a domestic setting to hanging on a gallery wall to covering a bed in a museum exhibit, its role and the messages it conveyed changed. Some messages became obscure, such as the named but otherwise anonymous makers, while new messages emerged, such as its links with an imagined past and its authority as a museum exhibit.

Few made objects are monogamous, particularly in our culture. Where they are, they are usually disposable and are also usually connected with food or with the more intimate body functions. An exception is a plain band of precious metal which can be worn on any digit of either hand but which, when worn on the third finger of the left hand at this time in this society, signifies publicly and privately a heterosexual marriage. The ring's *raison d'être* is as a symbol of emotional and legal attachment. When its human partner dies or divorces, the ring no longer has a purpose. The market for old wedding rings is poor; each new couple inaugurates the marriage contract with new rings which celebrate the singularity of their relationship. When the marriage finishes, the ring may follow the body to the grave, or it may be reincarnated into another form, another life.

On considering objects and their lives, we find that objects (continued on page 8)



# Inspiration, Imagination, and Determination

BY TRENT WATTS

A hot cup of coffee, the smell of a wood fire, a cast iron stove radiating heat, and a cold January day seemed like a great start to a visit with Geordie and Liz Smith of Ruddell, Saskatchewan. As we sat and chatted about the beginnings of G.McB. Smith Woodworks, it became obvious that Geordie and Liz were a real team. Five years ago they gave up life in the city of Regina to get away from the restrictions and pressures of a regular job (not to mention urban living). When friends expressed amazement at Geordie giving up a government job, his response was "Are you kidding? I have six bosses, I'm driving 5000 miles a month, and there were two murders in our neighborhood."

With this as a backdrop to their life situation, Liz and Geordie kept coming back to the idea of running their own business and being their own boss. On a visit to a friend in Ruddell, a 30 minute drive east of North Battleford, they saw a house that was rumored to be for sale. Back in Regina, a few days later, they got a call from their friend confirming that the house and two lots were for sale, indeed. Without a second thought, or a tour of the house, they arranged for the purchase and began their journey into full-time woodworking.

Some lean years have paid off. Income for 1994 will be within a few hundred dollars of their former government salary. They now feel miles ahead in their choice of lifestyle and masters of their own destiny.

Success has been the result of hard work, discipline, attending craft shows, and searching for markets. And serendipity has offered its hand on some occasions. One such instance was when an Ottawa store owner, (who just so happened to be a former RCMP officer who had been stationed in Raddison—a community close to Ruddell), noticed Geordie's salad servers at an Ottawa craft show. He liked what he saw. Before long, an arrangement was in place whereby Geordie's goods were being wholesaled through three major craft stores in Ottawa.



ABOVE Geordie Smith, at the drawing board, planning his work schedule. Photo by Trent Watts. OPPOSITE TOP *Gnome Boxes*, Left: Saskatchewan Birch; Right: Poplar, by Geordie Smith. OPPOSITE BOTTOM Collection of cooking utensils, Saskatchewan Birch, in oak display case, by Geordie Smith.

Mail order catalogues have been another source of continued income for the Smiths. *The Added Touch*, based out of Oakville, Ontario, and *The Canadian Catalogue of Catalogues*, from Chambly, Quebec, are two examples.

In some cases, Geordie says they have simply "hit it lucky." Much of the work from G. McB. Smith Woodworks is distributed in two dozen wholesale outlets spread from Water's Edge in Richmond, B.C., to an outlet in Chester Basin, Nova Scotia, with several points in between.

Learning the craft of woodworking began at an early age for Geordie. He remem-

bers as a teenager seeing a signature on the back of a chest of drawers he was helping his father refinish. The inscription *W.F. Smith 1910* jumped out at him and he was "hooked." To Geordie, the idea that someone—sixty or seventy years ago—had taken the time to sign his work was testament to pride in workmanship. To take pride in what one does is a quality that obviously made a lasting impression on the young Geordie Smith. Today, he likes to imagine that in a future year some antique shop visitor will see one of his chairs, and even though that person will not know who Geordie Smith was, will think, "he cared."

he took the time".

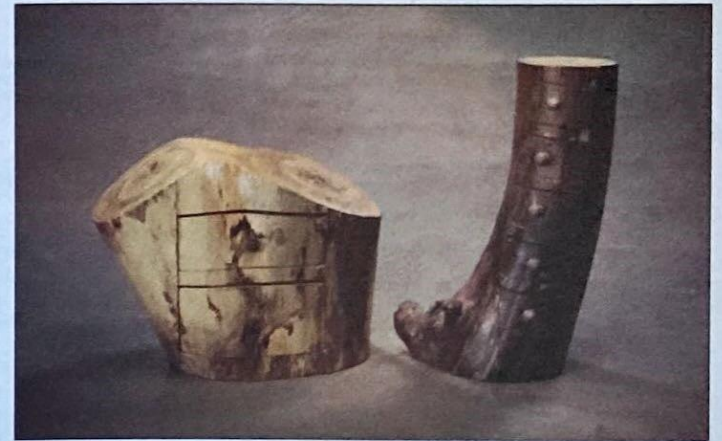
Since that occasion, Geordie has gained considerable experience in woodworking. Turning table legs for a commercial furniture maker, taking classes from master woodturners such as Mike Hosaluk and Del Stubbs, and attending furniture design/construction conferences have each played a part in Geordie's road to success. And hours of standing in front of a lathe have taught Geordie the skills to make his production items at an efficient rate.

Efficiency is exemplified by Geordie's ability to be disciplined. Making twenty dozen salad servers to fill one order requires a commitment to a routine. His January calendar illuminates this aspect of his character: Tuesday morning—turn honey dippers; Wednesday morning—cut out salad servers, and so on. Honey drippers (already produced at the time of my visit) were overflowing a large wooden bowl—another witness to the January regime. This self-imposed discipline has made it possible for Geordie to be productive during times when it might be easier to stay in bed or read a book. (Being your own boss does not, apparently, relieve you from the need to perform some boring repetitive tasks.)

All designs and wood types are kept simple and functional, reflecting the company philosophy. Most production items, such as honey dippers, butter knives, and salad servers, are made from Saskatchewan Birch. The honey dippers are turned from a solid piece of Birch with a tapered handle moving to a grooved end for dipping into a honey pot. This design produces a much more aesthetically-pleasing result than a straight dowel handle attached to a grooved dipper. Salad servers are gently S-shaped with three very functional "fingers" used to capture the salad. A mineral oil finish enhances the overall effect.

At the time of my visit, Geordie was just adding the finishing touches—an oil-based stain in a medium walnut tone and spray lacquered for extra durability—to a set of dining room chairs. While I was admiring the luster of these chairs, I also noted how solid they looked and felt. The curved back legs were cut from a single piece of oak. Spindles in the back of the chair were formed with a bent lamination into a pleasing curve that provided lumbar support. Seats were sculpted in an attractive fashion. As I sat on one of these chairs, I concluded that it would be comfortable for someone not so tall as I.

In contrast to conventional-type items, such as dining room furniture, are his little log boxes. Reminiscent of folkloric tales, Geordie calls them *Gnome Boxes*. Com-





posed of drawers and compartments with doors, these unusual pieces are a take-off on traditional bandsawn boxes. They are popular with customers, as they appeal to the imagination by conjuring up images of a hobbit-like creature hiding tiny treasures within. Using unpeeled logs as the raw material, Geordie cuts the log in such a way that he is able to make drawers "appear" out of the natural log. Drawer fronts and doors are the actual curved surface of the log and when opened lead to a storage area inside.

Inspiration to create these items occurred when Geordie—unable to afford expensive wood for a traditional bandsawn box—noticed the potential for a unique idea in an ordinary piece of firewood. His active imagination jumped into gear and he soon visualized how he would make drawers and shelves appear, as if by magic, from a simple fire log. With a few adjustments to the traditional techniques for bandsawn boxes, he began creating intriguing craft sale items from logs. His usage of a variety of designs, with combinations of drawers and compartments, has Liz convinced that he continually changes the number of compartments to keep her on her toes when establishing prices!

Fresh ideas for each year's craft shows have come naturally to the Smiths. While Liz says that Geordie has a wild imagination, he is more to the point with his own declaration that he has "a mind that is a cesspool of useless and scary information." He has frequently taken advantage of this trait when designing new items for production and one-of-a-kind pieces. While in this creative mode, Geordie recently thought of a way to turn discarded Christmas tree trunks into marketable craft. He was looking at these "useless" tree trunks and recalled a technique to turn facial profiles on a lathe. Some strategic carving on these

turned pieces launched a new sale item.

Geordie attributes much of his creative insights to spending hours, as a child in his family's antique store, staring at the shapes of beautiful glass and wooden articles. "I loved the shapes of all the glass pieces hanging in the window," he explains. Collections of vases, goblets, and plates in Cranberry glass, Satin glass, and Noritake china, sat on the shelf, their shapes and colours reflecting in the sun—a constant study in design for young Geordie's imagination. These fascinating shapes continue to fuel a vivid imagination and provide the source of much of his creative work. And working on the lathe is a natural outlet for creating original shapes. Gentle curves and flowing lines are evident even in simple productions items, such as the honey dippers and salad servers.

**While Liz says that Geordie has a wild imagination, he is more to the point with his own declaration that he has "a mind that is a cesspool of useless and scary information."**

Each year at Wintergreen, SunDog, and other craft shows, Geordie and Liz feature a new object by placing it at the front of the booth. This marketing technique serves to remind customers that it is worth stopping to sample some new items. Their first son provided the inspiration for some of these special items. Geordie made a cradle when his son was under a year of age and decided it would make a suitable feature object for the front of the booth. A high chair—again made for his son—was too good to pass up as the next feature item. (It seemed to me that this had potential for a long series!)

**THE LIVES OF OBJECTS**

(continued from page 5) spring from a rather shadowy, passive half-life to a rich, multi-layered, active engagement. This has repercussions for the viewer, the owner, and the maker. As viewers, we can come to dialogue with the object and, with a more critical eye, can ask what is the public message and what the personal, what is the impact of the object, what part does taste, fashion, culture, knowledge, or location play.

For the owner, there are the additional pleasures of handling, using, and contemplating the object over a long period, of developing like a marriage a joint history.

For the maker, particularly the craftsperson intimately involved with every as-

pect of production from concept to tangible object, using not only intellect but hands, body, energy, and heart, all of which leave their often unconscious mark, questions about the meanings of objects can affect the what and how of making. How largely does the unknown other who will partner this object loom in the mind of the maker? Does he think how the object will fit to hand or lip, feel against skin, support limbs? Does she ponder whether it will change and age gracefully, slowly deepening or lightening in colour and accepting the marks of use graciously like wood, or buckle and disintegrate like cardboard? Is the object's message part of an esoteric interior monologue, or does it reach out with wit, pleasure, and

However, Geordie has moved on to other display articles such as a *torcheres* lamp and turned pedestals from 18 to 30 inches high.

Down sides to self employment do exist. It can be difficult waiting for the next cheque to arrive in the mail. Budgeting becomes extremely difficult and is practised on a semi-annual basis, as opposed to a more traditional montly scheme (such as when working for a regular salary). Health problems and sickness mean a slowdown in the daily work routine. Phoning in sick for the day is not an option. Geordie's assertion that "it is difficult to find hired help that will work as hard as you do" underscores the time commitment it takes to run your own business.

The future is filled with anticipation and excitement for Geordie and Liz. They have plans to expand the markets locally in Ruddell by adding a tea house. They also have been tapping local maple trees for syrup. For this coming year's markets their goal is to tap 100 trees. Eventually, they would like to have enough for a three-day craft show. Never satisfied to rest on his laurels, Geordie has purchased a forge and signed up for blacksmithing classes. With his active imagination, no doubt this will add a whole new dimension to his work.

As I left the Smiths' home that chilly January day, I could not help but feel rewarded. Rewarded by seeing how people can have a vision of a more appealing life style, go after it, and reach their goals. Every time I drive by Ruddell, I will feel the radiant heat of the Smiths' stove and wonder what new creation is being added to their product line.

Trent Watts is a Saskatoon-based woodworker and current President of the Saskatchewan Woodworkers' Guild.

intelligibility? Is the object destined to play a vital part, however modest, in the bustling everyday life of the people, or is it destined for the art museum or the bank vault, a living death?

My thanks to Carol E. Mayer, Curator at UBC Museum of Anthropology for letting me have a prepublication copy of her paper "We Have These Ways of Seeing...: A Study of Objects in Differing Realities," presented at the Institute of Contemporary Canadian Craft conference, October 1993; and to Kevin Murray whose paper, "Til Death Us Do Part: A Structuralist Approach to Jewellery," in *Craft in Society*, edited by Norris Ioannou, provided some interesting ideas.

Sandra Flood has an M.A. in Art Gallery and Museum Studies and has recently received a Saskatchewan Arts Board Grant to do research into western Canadian craft history.

**Perspectives**

BY CHERYL WOLFENBERG & PAUL MATHIEU

In March of 1994, the Saskatchewan Craft Council and the Department of Visual Arts, University of Regina, co-sponsored a multi-media conference called *Beyond the Visual*, a three-day affair exploring issues of expression, function, production, design, and craftsmanship. Wrapping up the event was a panel discussion entitled "How Important is Function? How Important is Innovation? How Important is Importance?" in relation to crafts.

These issues—Function, Innovation, and Importance—are as relevant today as they were at the time of the conference. Following are the perspectives of two (of the four) panelists, written after the fact, reflecting upon the questions as posed during the discussion. These individuals: Cheryl Wolfenberg, a weaver from Regina, and Paul Mathieu, a potter from Montreal, are each accomplished craftspeople who have been in their respective fields for many years.

Wolfenberg views herself as an artisan who may very well represent the average artisan in Saskatchewan. She elaborates. "I exhibit in galleries regularly, do commission work, participate in artisan-level craft markets, and have had my talent validated by being chosen as a New Designer from Western Canada."

Mathieu is known in the higher echelons of Eastern Canada ceramic circles and teaches his craft at Concordia University. His speaking engagements include having given the keynote address at the *Beyond the Visual Conference*. This address, recently published by the Canadian Museum of Civilization, can be found in the book *Making and Metaphor: A Discussion of Meaning in Contemporary Crafts* under the title "The Space of Pottery".

As you will see, the perspectives of these two people who are connected by craft, reveal the continuum of thought held by craftspeople. They often show extremes. Yet, they sometimes concur—with varying degrees of conviction. In any case, the approach they take to address an issue illustrates a broad spectrum and most certainly is reflective of their diverse backgrounds.

**How Important is Function?**

When asked to ponder this question, both Wolfenberg and Mathieu acknowledge function as having its place. And both are in agreement that, traditionally, crafts played a functional role. Where they differ, however, is in their opinions as to the role of function in today's world. Wolfenberg maintains that, in her work, while it is not the first consideration when creating a piece of work, function is inherent in the nature of her craft. Consequently, many crafted works are frequently used:

"I do not view myself as a traditional weaver in any way, shape or form. My loom is my canvas on which I express myself. I am always more interested in colour and the ideas I wish to convey. Functionality is of secondary importance. However, the very nature and history of weaving denotes that even a wall hanging serves a secondary function of providing warmth from drafts or hiding cracks in the wall. Most crafts based in tradition have an underlying functional value."

Mathieu describes himself as a potter. Like weaving, pottery is steeped in tradition. As such, he designs his pieces with function in mind. Yet he maintains that many of today's functional crafts are rarely used:



ABOVE *Blue Flower Trails*, cotton, rayon, linen, handmade and handpainted buttons, by Cheryl Wolfenberg.

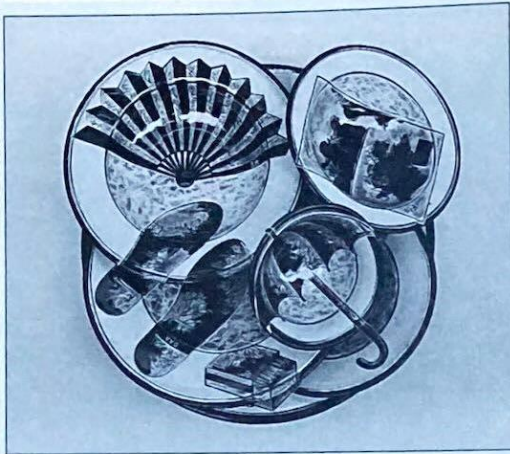
"In my own practise, function is important and in many ways central to an understanding of the work. Most, if not all of what I do, is functional pottery. And if not always obviously functional, most of my work needs to be touched, manipulated by the hand (I repeat myself on purpose) and experienced by the other senses as well. Yet, I am all too aware that in the world we live in, crafts do not play the same role they played historically and a lot of functional crafts made today are rarely, if ever, used. They fulfill some other essential role. But function, or a reflection on function, remains the source for much crafts and in that sense, function is important."

**How Important is Innovation?**

The two responses to this question differ in the approach taken to discuss it. Mathieu ponders the answer in a philosophical sense:

"When I am asked how important is innovation, I have to say probably very little. Yet, it depends a lot on what is understood by innovation. For modernism, innovation was a driving force. Fortunately, I believe things have changed. The historical art that I find the most inspiring is usually anonymous art, art that has changed very slowly over centuries, art where the universal takes precedence over ego. I am thinking of pre-columbian pottery, much Egyptian sculpture or Chinese bronze bell, for example. These works are still moving and relevant today although they reveal nothing or very





**ABOVE** *The Will to Will / La Volonté de Vouloir* (1987), porcelain (6 pieces), 15x15x6" by Paul Mathieu. Coll.: Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England. Photo courtesy of the artist.

**OPPOSITE PAGE** *Les Six Voies: Les Mots / The Six Ways: The Words* (1992). Various techniques/materials including goatskin, calfskin and boxcalf leathers, nylon mesh/fibreglass binding, and man-made materials. By Nicole Billard, Lise Dubois, Louise Genest, Denise Bellemare, Cristine Chartrand, Simone Roy. Photo courtesy of CBBAG.

little about the individuals who made them. I do not think they offer a model to follow. I am all too aware that they often were made under conditions of extreme hardship and oppression. Yet when I look at these objects, I wonder what will be left of our culture for others to experience centuries from now."

While Mathieu approaches the issue of innovation through the eyes of an art historian, Wolfenberg perceives the innovation issue in the context of actual experience. She observes what people value today and in the recent past. In her view, tradition plays a significant role:

"As someone who collects and enjoys antiques and auctions, I enjoy watching what people collect and what the public values from our past. People are willing to pay huge sums for articles that were produced in factories or made by hand to traditional patterns. What they are responding to is the quality of the article or something about it that triggers a mood or memory."

"In terms of innovation, artisans from the past were valued for their interpretation of traditional designs as well as new ideas."

"During the panel discussions, I discovered myself defending traditional weaving and applauding my lack of excitement for technological (presumably innovative) advances."

#### How Important is Importance?

It is in this realm that the perspectives of the panelists diverge the most: Wolfenberg's disdain for what she calls artspeak is revealed and Mathieu's academic background comes to the forefront.

Mathieu responds to "How Important is Importance" as such:

"This question is obviously not as important as the other two but it also holds the key to the whole debate. Asking such a question is symptomatic of a certain attitude in the craft community, a certain coy reluctance to intellectualism, theories and discourses. For I believe that if crafts have a lot to gain in interacting with other fields, (art is one of them), the reverse is also true and we have a lot to offer

too. This exchange among equals can only happen if we agree to collaborate in the larger discussions taking place now. Much of the ghettoization of crafts is self-induced. At a time when all art forms are exploring the tension between mediated technology and its effect on reality, domesticity and everyday life, crafts can play a significant role in offering possible solutions since these tensions have always been part of what constitute and define crafts. In order for certain words to lose their pejorative connotations, they must not only redefine themselves but reaffirm their positive aspects. The reluctance of the craft community to participate in this affirmation not only in actions, which it does, but in words as well, is slowing this process."

"Any phenomenon can be called art (to give importance usually). Yet in a world of material transformation, craft is the operative factor. Unfortunately, we let semantics interfere with knowledge and how we understand the world."

Wolfenberg's reaction to Mathieu's assertion that crafts ghettoization is self-induced is not so much whether or not that is the case, but an astonishment that so much energy is exerted in this direction. She maintains that there is a wide gap between what she views as the fine arts world and the average working artisan—herself being the latter. While she likes to have her work looked at, appreciated (by everyone, including the fine arts world), and have it touch someone, she believes that too much importance is placed on what the art world says and thinks:

"A hundred years ago, a fine craftsman was recognized as both artist and artisan. Perhaps this will be so a hundred years from now. But the reality of today's world is that there is much controversy and discussion over this very issue. The distinction between artist and artisan has become academic. I suggest, therefore, that as artisans we should stop trying to bridge the official gulf between the world of art and the reality that we live and create in. It is time that we stop trying to push for recognition in the art world such as we know it today."

"In the meantime, I will create and express my thoughts the way I choose and be proud that my work is a unique interpretation of a history long past and a history yet to be. The finest tribute is the knowledge that you have created an object that has satisfied your inner needs and responded to the emotions of its owner. No artist can ask for more."

#### In Conclusion

So there it is: the thoughts expressed by two craftspeople linked by the love of their work. The issues—function, innovation, and importance—will continue, no doubt, to be discussed in various contexts for some time to come. The debate goes on...

Cheryl Wolfenberg is a weaver from Regina.

Paul Mathieu is a potter from Montreal.

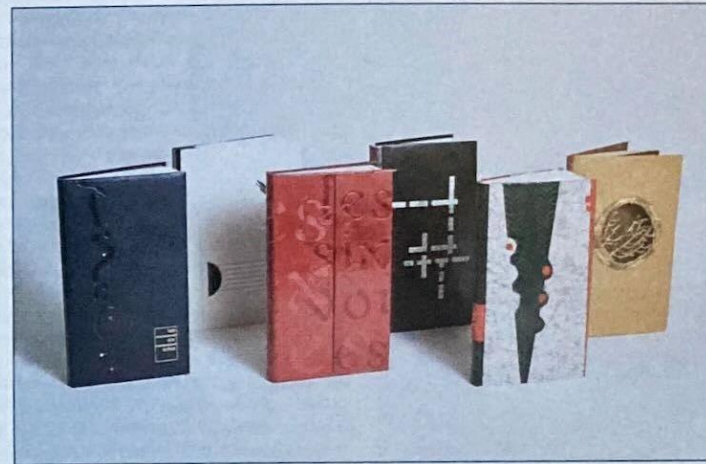
**Saskatchewan Handcraft Festival**  
and craft show  
**Dimensions '95**

Friday, July 14  
10:00 AM to 8:00 PM  
Saturday, July 15  
10:00 AM to 8:00 PM  
Sunday, July 16  
12:00 NOON to 6:00 PM

Battleford Arena & Alex Dillabough Centre  
**Battleford, Saskatchewan**

A PRESENTATION OF THE SASKATCHEWAN CRAFT COUNCIL  
Supported by Saskatchewan Lotteries, the Saskatchewan Arts Board, and the Town of Battleford.

# Exhibitions



## Judging Books by Their Covers

BY KRISTINA KOMENDANT

### "Art of the Book '93"

Triangle Gallery, Gallery of Visual Arts  
Calgary AB

March, 1993, to January, 1995

I awaited the opening of the exhibition, "Art of the Book '93" (AB '93) in Calgary with anticipation. As a member of the Canadian Bookbinders and Book Artists Guild (CBBAG), I had received the exhibition catalogue eight months earlier. This juried exhibition of CBBAG members' works, to celebrate their tenth anniversary, had already made an appearance in Toronto (March 1993), Winnipeg, Halifax, Vancouver, Ottawa, and now, for the year end 1994, in Calgary. Pointe Claire, Quebec, would be its final destination in January, 1995.

AB '93 would not only hold my interest with excellent calligraphic and marbled paper art works, but with fine examples of bookbinding, boxmaking, artists' books, papermaking and fine printing. Two hundred and seventy two works were submitted by CBBAG members from Canada and abroad, with eighty-seven pieces selected. This show was following in the footsteps of the first successful "Art of the Book" show which opened at the Ontario

Craft Council in 1988.

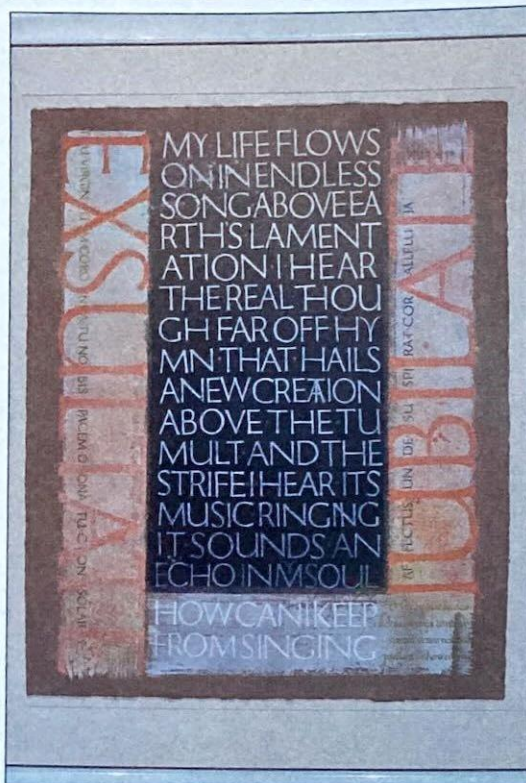
The gallery which sponsored the show in Calgary was the Triangle Gallery, Gallery of Visual Arts, located in downtown Calgary. The gallery is aptly named because of its triangular shape. On the second floor, the local Calgary CBBAG group had assembled an accompanying show of their own works relating to the book arts "Bound to Please". As I entered the gallery at the apex of the triangle, I saw that it was filled to capacity for the opening reception. The glass pedestal stands containing many of the books were hidden from view because of the crowd. I decided to venture off to my right first because marbled and calligraphic wall pieces had caught my eye.

What struck me immediately about the marbled and calligraphic pieces was how much more alive, larger, and (in some instances) much brighter they were than what I had seen in the catalogue. Handmade papers and fine printing also accented the walls and all served as a refreshing contrast to the pedestal stands of books.

Polly Fox (U.S.A.) had two interesting samples of her work: *Previously Uncharted Territory* (1991) and *New Mexican Flower* (1992). Both pieces displayed the Japanese method of marbling called *suminagashi*. Fox's palette was soft with pale grey, blue, beige and red. The pattern of undulating and shifting waves and an abstract flower image gave evidence of excellent control and experience within the manipulation of tools and technique. However, I would have liked to have seen two very differing examples of marbling side by side by the same artist.

*Grey on Black* (1990) by Gillian Chipperfield (U.K.), which received the Colophon Book Arts Supply award for paper decoration, expressed an almost mystical and airy atmosphere with dark and light greys and black. After viewing the other marbled wall pieces which were similar in subdued colours and undramatic





ABOVE *Exsultate Jubilate* (1988), calligraphic letterforms in gouache on St. Armand handmade paper, by Nancy Ruth Jackson. Photo courtesy CBBAG.

OPPOSITE PAGE An installation of 14 upholstered divans by Patrick Traer.

patterning, I felt somewhat disappointed. I had hoped to see something really extraordinary from this one-of-a-kind technique of paper decorating.

Nancy Ruth Jackson (Canada), the recipient of the Woolfits Art Enterprises AB '93 award for Calligraphy for her piece *Exsultate Jubilate* (1988), certainly deserved a better placement in the gallery than the back space of the base corner of the triangle. The calligraphic letterforms in this piece are Roman capitals in white and pale orange gouache on St. Armand handmade paper. The piece was exceptionally balanced in design. Lindley McDougall, President of the Bow Valley Calligraphy Guild, analysed this piece with me for letterforms; the consensus was that they were perfect. The center text showed great control of line length and careful word spacing, demonstrating masterful European-style lettering, where inner word space is limited. Words such as *creation* and *ringing* showed her confidence with this. Jackson's other piece, *House Blessing* (1991), impressed me more. What intrigued me the most about this piece was its multi-layered appearance. A marbled paper background in a bouquet pattern of subtle greens, blues, greys, and pinks held three floral motifs of green leaves and purple abstract flowers. On the floral patterns were the words, *JOIE* (Joy), *PAIX* (Peace), *BENEDICTION* (Blessing) in deep red. In between

these three lines was yet another text in French and in white gouache. The piece was complex in composition, but each layer did not interfere or obstruct the legibility or beauty of the text. A gallery label, giving the English translation, would have been helpful.

And what about the books? I decided to return the next day when there was more breathing and viewing space. The main drawback of all the books on display was that they were in glass cases. To appreciate a handbound book, one has to hold it, touch it, and examine it closely from the inside out, and from start to finish. As I viewed the books as best as I could by wandering around the cases, I kept thinking of the old saying "you cannot judge a book by its cover". Many of the books were blank on the inside; in those instances, outside viewing was enough. Others, however, had illustrations, text, and drawings inside which could not be totally appreciated because they were only opened at one page and held in place with a clear plastic strip.

The majority of books in the exhibition were artists' books which came in many different shapes, sizes, textures, and forms. Materials such as handmade papers, bark, leather, cloth, and wood were popular media used.

Gretchen Weber (U.S.A.) showed skill in her calligraphy as well as material selection for her accordion book *Weeds* (1990). A variety of handmade and Japanese papers in neutral colours with torn edges, silk thread, and calligraphic text in browns and greens evoked a feeling of the natural.

Anne-Claude Cotty's (Canada) *Finish Line* (1992) was partially opened and I would have liked to have seen all the pop-up images of athletic forms (in silkscreen) at the finish line of sporting events.

*Agri Culture* (1992) by Karen Kunc (U.S.A.) consisted of sewn-bound pieces of carved and painted cherry wood. The book held eighteen pages in half-moon shapes and also had a wooden box in which it could be stored. I would have liked to have examined this book more closely because of its fascinating textures.

The ultimate expertise in technical as well as artistic skill can be seen in the fine binding category. These books were in cases as well. To get a complete appreciation of the intricacies of fine binding, I had asked Colin Bate of Colin Bate Books to enlighten me as we viewed the pieces together. Colin is a bookbinder of forty years. He operates his shop in Calgary where he and his staff repair, restore, fine bind, and conserve books old and new.

AB '93 granted the Design Award to six women from the Montreal area with their collaborative effort, *Les Six Voies: Les Mots*. (*The Six Ways: The Words*) (1992). Each of the six women—Louise Genest, Lise Dubois, Simone Roy, Nicole Billard, Denise Bellemare and Cristine Chartrand—had one signature (section) to write and illustrate about the theme *words*. It had to be done by hand and had to be reproducible so that each of the six would have a copy of her own. With text in hand, each woman then set out to design and finebind a cover. The books showed a diversity of approaches and the overall visual appearance was unified.

Louise Genest, the organizer of the project, chose red boxcall leather for her book cover. This temperamental leather responded extremely well to embossing, and the title words *Les Six Voies* done in this fashion became the design for the cover. A 3-D onlay was hidden under flaps and added another dimension to her book.

Nicole Billard's book was especially admired by Colin. The execution in fine binding was excellent and the book showed overall grace and simplicity. Gold tooling was used for the title *Les Six Voies*. The art of impressing a design or letter on leather or other material with gold takes much experience. It is the most exact and precise skill a bookbinder acquires. Coloured dots onlaid and off to the left completed the look of this book.

Simone Roy's caramel coloured goatskin cover with an aperture was very unusual and eye arresting. Tree branches and six hands joined by small threads (representing cooperation) gave this book a three dimensional and sculptural feeling all its own.

Nylon mesh or fiberglass binding was used for Denise Bellemare's book. The cover design used the theme *words* in a word puzzle pattern. It appeared more contemporary and less sophisticated than the others.

Lise Dubois used the Japanese style of binding; but instead of having the side stitching visible, it was enclosed in hard covers giving the book a more solid appearance. White calfskin leather, with contrasting contour shapes, gave it an overall impression of form.

Cristine Chartrand used man-made materials resembling leather in black, red, and white for her cover. These pieces formed a vertical pattern which drew one into the cover design. The gold tooling, again, in this piece was excellent. The covers of all six books did awaken my curiosity to examine the signatures inside—but alas, I could not.

The Henry N.R. Jackman Foundation award for the Best in the Show went to Don Taylor (Canada) for *Gamebox* (1992). Many fine binders construct boxes to contain their books. In this instance, Taylor's box did not contain a book but imaginary games. At first glance, Colin remarked on the box's ingenuity of concept and design. The box had a fantasy aspect to it, not only because of what it contained, but also the feeling which it evoked. The *Gamebox* contained a set of sixteen gameboards covered with bright, decorative paper. Different layouts and grids were imposed on the surface by black strips of book cloth. Hidden boxes inside the larger ones were present with book cloth pull tabs to open and close them. It was unfortunate not to be able to pull on these to see how well they fit into one another. The cover of the box was of sail cloth: a rugged book cloth which can withstand a great deal of handling. A lidded drawer held mysterious game pieces such as milagros, trade beads, and pebbles. The planning of the concept and design is the most important step in the construction of a well-made box. Once this has been executed properly, perfect craftsmanship comes into play. When one hears a "whoosh" of air expelled from a clamshell box—the style used in this piece—it is perfect. Colin was not surprised that the *Gamebox* won overall Best in the Show. It did somehow invite the viewer to imagine play just by its presence.

The book arts today encompass many different people from different visual art and craft backgrounds: from printmakers, papermakers, bookbinders, calligraphers, paper decorators to photographers. The variety of works produced by these creative people were all seen together at AB '93 which made for a visually exciting experience. Even though the books could not be handled, I did respond to them because of their shapes, textures and words. With double the entries submitted to this exhibition as compared to the first "Art of the Book" in 1988, the book arts are alive and well in Canada. I walked away from this exhibition knowing there will always be a need for books with good design and craftsmanship.

Kristina Komendant is a Saskatoon-based calligrapher who specializes in poems and quotations, business cards and logo designs, and outdoor signs.



## Art, Craft, and Upholstery

BY PAULA GUSTAFSON

Patrick Traer  
"Plush"

Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver  
December 3, 1994 to January 14, 1995

Three weeks before Saskatoon-based artist Patrick Traer's "Plush" exhibition opened in Vancouver, one of the city's dance companies organized a fundraising event featuring sofas, loveseats, and armchairs decoratively painted by local artists. Intended for a gala auction, the art-furniture was previewed in city centre store windows. Among the memorable displays was a "love couch" with cushions painted as open poetry books, another where the seating area was defined by large, outspread hands painted palms up, and one that particularly caught the attention of passersby—a sofa with a reclining nude painted full-length on the unbleached cotton covering.

These unintentional prefaces to Traer's exhibition of 14 taffeta-covered divans at the Contemporary Art Gallery inevitably triggered questions in my mind about art, craft, and upholstery.

Unlike the designer seating, Traer's soft sculpture was not for domestic use. In fact, his silky smooth biomorphic forms were clustered at one end of the gallery, positioned next to an illuminated sign that admonished "please do not touch".

Approximately the size of human bodies, Traer's upholstered sculptures had the appearance of a swarm of tadpoles, or sperm. Less suggestively, the 14 shapes resembled a collection of out-sized, ripened bean pods laid out side by side on the gallery floor.

According to curator Bruce Grenville, who wrote about Traer's intention when this exhibition was shown at the Mendel Art Gallery in 1993, the sculptures challenge the traditional represen-



tation of the human body "as a contained and unitary entity and instead speak of a body of indeterminate limits and symbiotic inhabitation, a body which resists the control and definition of contemporary rationalist ideology."

I have no idea what this means. (The excerpt is taken from one of the least convoluted sections of Grenville's essay which delves into such things as Surrealist psycho-sexuality, "the Lacanian triumvirate," and "pre-oedipal modes.") Frankly, I was more intrigued by the fact that Traer's blood-red sculptures were skirted with box pleats.

I admit this is a frivolous response to a serious endeavour, but it led to a curiosity about both the artwork and the artist. A little research revealed that the upholstery credit goes to Peter Sacher's upholstery business. The other component of the "Plush" exhibition, four machine-embroidered cloth panels depicting coral or sea-fernd organic designs, were stitched by Anne Zbirun.

This contracting-out places Traer in the category of a conceptualist, rather than a hands-on artist, forcing the reviewer to disregard the artist's involvement in the project's workmanship (a regrettable situation, since both the upholstery and the stitchery are meticulously executed).

Traer can be complimented for choosing red/green iridescent shot taffeta for the divan sculptures, and black satin-stitching on black moiré taffeta for the wall-mounted *Systemic Drawings*, but, beyond his selection of materials, authorial responsibility for the work slides into the muddy pool of ideas that Grenville stirs. There is no artist's statement.

In a review of Traer's drawings dealing with the same issues as "Plush" (published in the Winter 1991 issue of *Canadian Art*), Grenville notes, "The disproportionate emphasis that we place on the surface of the body and its representation is the product of a culture that gives high priority to the visual and rejects the material."

In the context that craft skills play an important, no—essential—role in the material construction of visual art, Grenville's words bring up an issue that perhaps wasn't intended: the ethics of acknowledging, fully and fairly, the contribution of those people who produce the work of "artists".

Paula Gustafson is a Vancouver-based freelance visual arts writer.

## Loops and Hoops

BY DOUGLAS TAYLOR

**Delores Norman**

"Wall Rugs and Willows"

Saskatchewan Craft Gallery, Saskatoon  
October 21 to November 29, 1994

Many people recalling their rag rug experiences will think of the gracefully squashed, worn, perfectly soiled and faded examples in antique shops and expensive urban folk-art collections. They're popular! If you can find one at all you're not likely to be overly concerned with the imagery contained within its borders. They're usually made anonymously and simply finding one is a feat. Now imagine entering a gallery with two dozen

or so crisp, signed, relatively recently made, clean examples. I came away with a case of rag-rug overdose and willow-furniture blues. Let me explain.

I've had it too good! Gallery and museum going in Saskatchewan has done a number on me. Where else can you see genuine "Petrified Pemmican", a bedpan collection, and an Auguste Rodin bronze all in one day? Seeing stuff makes me think—always—and I can't turn it off. I don't just let the colors, textures, and stories flow over me; I have to be a critic, a techno-weenie for detail and question seeking, and I demand stimulation. I think of fibre artists doing new things with traditional utilitarian items: Bob Boyer's blankets, Ruth Cuthand's shirts, Joyce Weiland and Barbara Todd's quilts. This is the load I was carrying as I entered Delores Norman's exhibition; her second career solo show.

The pieces were not arranged in any particular order. One might have started with Delores' self portrait which, ironically, was placed the furthest back on the gallery's east wall, beside the reception counter. Titled *Come Fly With Me* (1994), it shows a back view of the artist as a pig-tailed young girl sitting on a flowery hilltop (with a kitty?) flying a kite. This piece eloquently identifies the perspective of the entire exhibition. These are highly personal memories of a short period in a child's life on a farm. All of the images portrayed in every of the two dozen or so rugs could have been snapshots from the same spring day in nineteen forty-something anywhere in North America, with the exception of *Bringing in the Sheaves* (1990) which I assume is a fall scene. I couldn't find a characteristic that would exclusively identify any piece in the show as the advertised "Saskatchewan Style".

The rugs themselves are of doormat size and mostly depict a highly ordered and manicured barnyard landscape. The problem with this scale and medium is resolution—if the goal is the eye's field of view. Using free standing loops of springy fabric as mosaic-like pixels of color is evidently a constraint, or sometimes a liberation. Something on the order of painting with a brick! I like *Pink House* (1988) because it happily disregards the constraints of scale by having gigantic trees and looming planted flowers towering over the central structure. *Robins Return* (1991) displays a similar playful micro/macro use of scale.

Nearly all of the rugs are blocked out in areas of solid colora colors. The skies are blue, the grass green, fence brown, and so on. There are exceptions to this rule; most notably in *Country Scenes — Chair Seat Covers* (1990), where Delores uses fabrics with flecks of color in the weave and employs varying hues to create visual relief. In contrast, *Our Farm* (1988) shows tractor, dog, bunnies, chickens, geese, tulips, and flower beds laid out in predictable solid colors and arrangements.

Other rugs seem cluttered with too many cookie cutter profiles in forced array. *Doing the Chores* (1992) has nine examples of five same-planned lifeforms placed across its surface in this way. Similarly, the small band of blue sky in *Outhouse* (1988) contains "m" birds and the RE/MAX balloon. I like *Chickens, Leghorn Chickens* (1991) because it gives us printed textile style views of a couple of dozen of the same kind of chicken on a striking green background.

Many of Norman's rugs feature colored valentine hearts in corners or spaced along the borders. In fact, *Cat Napping* (1988) features an arc of red hearts over the calico and blue hearts on the black border. There are some tremendously overworked images in the country craft industry; and the heart tops the list, followed perhaps by ribbons, bows, kitties, geese, and loons. I think these images must serve as shields or force-fields to ward off evil.

As I continued my examination of the theme being explored by

Delores, it became clear that something was missing. The notion really gelled for me while viewing, and later thinking about, *Farm Foreclosure* (1990). The scene worked up in intentionally subdued tones is that of a boarded-up house in a neglected farmyard. There are no birds or animals to be found and the text describes the artist's profound anger and depression over the end of a neighbour's family farm. Although I agree that this may not have been a happy time for the land-owner, I turned this around and thought about renewal, about diversity—specifically *bio*-diversity. Here is a parcel of land which persists in a state of slow change today. Its most recent history of ten thousand years (since the last kilometre-thick glacier wrenched over it) has seen it host to perfectly diverse plant and animal communities which, by the way, included humans. For a very brief period this land was transformed into a modern farm and now, inevitably, will succumb to natural life forces—decay and renewal. We may mourn the loss of peace, production and toil, yet I see little call for anger or depression. Was the human presence blight or bonus? I do not doubt the thrift and resourcefulness commonly attributed to the pioneers—it's to what goal this energy was pressed that is called into question in many current public exhibits. Real farm stories are as likely to feature isolation, disarray, and conquest on at least an equal footing with bounty and happiness. Throughout much of the history of agrarian Saskatchewan, "nature" was viewed as the enemy. There were no questions about the imperative of growth. Now, is this the stimulation I'm looking for?

Along with the rugs in Norman's show are a number of technically weak and incongruous pieces of willow furniture and baskets. I suppose these are intended to illustrate the artist's scope and further resourcefulness. I was surprised when Delores confessed to me her loathing of the labour involved in the collecting, hauling, sorting, cutting, and assembling of willow pieces. It is unclear if she is actually satisfied with the finished products; it's the pain of the labour that seems to be the most important part of the exercise. When we met, any discussion of technique was quickly halted in the name of naiveté.

A commonly held view is that hooped willow furniture was stylish in pioneer homes. In fact, having any homemade furniture usually marked the owner as impoverished. So called "traditional" willow furniture was reserved for hunting lodges and resorts along with antler and studded leather and burlwood furniture. There is currently a global rustic revival which seems to be based on a trend to things western and country. Norman's willow pieces are typical of this trend. Other excellent examples of this style can be found in *Cowboys and Indians* magazine. About a year ago, *Architectural Digest* magazine featured an entire issue on the contemporary rustic look in new homes.

I think *Magazine Basket* (1992) deserves the most merit among the willow pieces for its imaginative design simplicity. Unfortunately, it was placed on the floor at the back of the gallery. The largest willow piece, *Tête à Tête* (1993), is an example of satisfactory basic willow construction where sheer mass substitutes for engineering to produce the desired structural strength.

Delores Norman clearly possesses a tenacious creative drive which is currently based on deep retrospection. I hope, in future, to find this strength used to fill in the gaps of her expressions or to show us she's found some fresh flowers to smell. Let's have fun out there!

Doug Taylor is a woodturner from Livelong, SK, and the Dimensions '94 Premier's Prize Winner.



TOP *Flower Cow* (1994), fortrel, cotton polyester blends on burlap, 39 centimetres square, by Delores Norman.

MIDDLE *Chickens, Leghorn Chickens* (1991), cotton, polyester blends, fortrel on burlap, 66 centimetres in width, by Delores Norman.

BOTTOM *Pink House* (1988), fortrel, polyester blends on burlap, 100 centimetres in width, by Delores Norman.



# Shibori . . . Desperately Stitching Susan

BY MYRNA GENT

SUSAN CLARK

"One-of-a-Kind Garments"  
Saskatchewan Craft Gallery, Saskatoon  
January 20 to March 5, 1995

Three years ago, Susan Clark attended the International Shibori Symposium in Nagoya, Japan, which drastically influenced her creative work; and she pursued this interest to the extent that she moved to Tokyo in the summer of 1994. Her show "One-of-a-Kind Garments", from January to March of 1995, exhibited three different aspects of her fibre art. At first glance, one might believe that the darker, richer colours of the newer pieces reflect Clark's impressions of her move to Japan, while the jewel tones of the earlier works echo her sensibilities of the prairies.

However, this change in colour is inherent to the technique Clark is now using when dyeing silk or wool. The brilliantly-hued, nature-inspired early works are painted onto the silk with, usually, pure dyes within resist outlined areas, rather like colouring within the lines in a colouring book. The shibori technique Clark is presently experimenting with uses thread as the resist and undergoes numerous dips into different coloured dye baths, starting from light and progressively working toward darker colours. Thus, the background becomes richer, but also more somber, with each dip into the dye pot. So it is not Clark's feelings that have changed, but rather, her technique.

So what is *shibori*? It is a Japanese word which comes from the verb *shiboru* which means *wring* or *squeeze*. It describes a method of embellishing textiles when the fabric is pinched, pleated, folded, gathered, knotted, tied, and then bound tightly with string to protect the fabric from the dye into which it is immersed. After removing the string, which is in itself a slow and painstaking procedure, a hazy pattern is revealed: it can be radial, squarish, spider web or straight lines. Thus, a great variety of patterns can be achieved depending on how the cloth has been manipulated. The one great advantage of shibori is that the preparatory work is portable; while its drawback is the repetitive nature of the tying. The joy must occur when the piece is removed from the final dye pot, the strings removed, and the whole fabric is revealed for the first time.

Three of the most intriguing garments in the show were pleated shibori vests of wool. The pleats in these garments had been left in—this is accomplished by allowing the fabric to dry. The pleats which almost look like smocking were stabilized by lining. Wool is not a traditional fibre to use with pleated shibori, but obviously works well and is eminently suitable to the Saskatchewan climate. One vest had three random shaped mother-of-pearl buttons as embellishment; another, a long open style, had the uppermost surface of the pleats painted with metallic pigment; and the third had a row of twigs stitched in red to each front panel and closed with



ABOVE *Shibori Long Vest*, pleated wool, dyed and painted with metallic paints, size M, by Susan Clark.

OPPOSITE *Tibetan Panel Coat*, shibori tie-dyed Jacquard and satin silk, size M, by Susan Clark.

two large coat buttons. This garment won the Surfacing award in an invitational and juried show "Skin and Bones" of the Textile Dyers and Printers Association of Ontario. Each of these had a rich aubergine background with various horizontal coloured areas. A fourth pleated vest had the pleats partially pressed out, leaving a waffle-like surface with very regular stripes.

In addition, a series of three vests were applied. The ultrasuede pieces appliqued onto wool were of naturalistic design: ginkgo leaves on black, maple leaves on blue and green, and bamboo leaves on royal blue, with embroidery on their surfaces.

But my favourite work in the entire show was the *Tibetan Panel Coat*. Traditionally, these garments were pieced and Clark chose to combine vertical panels of brilliant cinnabar and purple between the areas of pied beauty of the shibori. The combination was very successful. However, a whole garment in pleated and tie-dyed shibori can be overwhelming as demonstrated by the suit, *Long Jacket and Skirt*.

The show in our gallery was fundamentally two-dimensional, but it is necessary to remember that these garments will become three-dimensional on the human body. One garment, a black jacket, had rondels of tie-dyed shibori and cord stitched on the sides, but they were mainly hidden by the long sleeves. However, when viewed on a body, the design will appear and disappear as the arms move. Another garment, *Fawn Shibori Jacket*, when displayed alone was my least favourite piece in the show. But when combined with the accompanying bolt of dusty gold fabric, it became a subtle and sophisticated garment; and I coveted it. [see front cover]

Another jacket, with a brown background, had a border around the bottom that was practically luminescent. The colours shimmered out of the dark silk in a leaf pattern, in a kaleidoscope of

# A Question of Expectations

BY NOREEN NEU

"MADE FOR A CAUSE"

Curated by Sandra Flood  
Saskatchewan Craft Council  
December 2, 1994, to January 15, 1995

When an exhibition is called "Made for a Cause" what sorts of questions start to pop up? When it is organized by the Saskatchewan Craft Council, what sorts of expectations start to be developed?

When I was invited to write a review of this exhibition, I immediately started formulating questions. I wondered who this exhibition was being organized for. I wondered who would be in it and I wondered what sort of work I might see. What were the goals of the people involved?

The introduction in the exhibition catalogue, written by Don Kondra, Exhibitions Chairperson, and Leslie Porter, Gallery Coordinator, states that the original intent of this exhibition was to "stimulate the craftspeople, getting them to reach beyond their normal frame of work, pushing them to focus on the political, sociological, and/or ecological realm." As such, my assignment for *The Craft Factor* was to analyse how effectively these issues were presented in the works. I questioned my role. Could I make a constructive contribution?

An exhibition such as this one should definitely be about analysis. If the work really is about a critique of the social environment in which we live, that should be apparent on every level. The gallery should be looking closely at its role in the organization and presentation of these art works, the curator should be concerned with what the exhibition is saying as a whole to the audience, and each and every artist—especially when they are declaring their political bias by being in such an exhibition—should be extremely diligent in their own self-criticism.

Generally, the visual arts have become increasingly difficult for the uninitiated to understand. At least that is what we have come to believe. We all recognize that the arts have slowly become less and less an integral part of the average person's life. Some would say that art has become elitist and unto itself.

Sandra Flood, as curator of this exhibition, recognized this dilemma. As past editor of *The Craft Factor*, she became acutely aware of audience; and as curator of this exhibition, she attempted to pull together a collection of works that might speak to a broad audience. "Craft works that lend themselves to public discussion and that exist all along the broad continuum that is craft." From the crude to the very fine. From the decorative to the truly functional. What may not be apparent by just viewing this exhibition is the long history that craft carries of being made for a cause.

Flood sees the works like text, where the audience comes to them already primed, equipped with their experiences. "For most people these works are very accessible and they leave a lot of room for the audience to talk with the work." This position can be argued, of course, but I would agree that this exhibition does have



golds, purples, and greens.

A shawl in the pleated shibori method with embroidered edging was quite intriguing. As this *crepe de chine* piece was not lined, as the vests were, it allowed us to view the pleating in a more informal manner, the shawl molding itself and clinging to the body in a way that is quite unusual for silk.

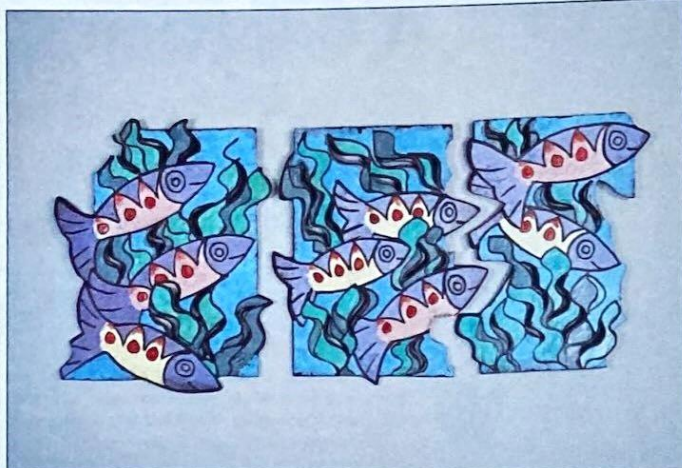
As mentioned before, the show also had a small collection of painted silk pieces, a number of them on a paisley Jacquard satin silk. Most of us are familiar with Clark's work in this medium; and there have been reviews in this magazine before, so descriptions of these pieces are not presented here.

Clark is generous in sharing her knowledge of the little-known shibori technique. After her return from her first trip to Japan, she taught two shibori classes through the Extension Division at the University of Saskatchewan. As an educational component to the show, Clark displayed a photograph album of various stages of her work. As they say, "a picture is worth a thousand words", and it [a picture] plainly exhibited the hundreds of tiny stitches that composed the simple lozenge design of the *Navy and Brown Sleeveless Blouse*, or the wrinkled mass that would open up to become a wearable garment. Actual step-by-step instructions, along with more coloured photographs, were also given for some pieces.

Clark's show demonstrated numerous techniques in a variety of garment styles for both men and women. It will be interesting to watch her further development to see if she continues with all of these "threads" or devotes her energies to a particular one. I hope that she continues "desperately stitching" the shibori, particularly the pleated variety, for it is truly one-of-a-kind.

Myrna Gent is a Saskatoon-based weaver and a frequent contributor to *The Craft Factor*.





something to offer almost everybody. What we have is a diverse group of works by a highly varied range of makers speaking to a fairly recognized selection of popular concerns. They talk about the environment, about world politics, about gender issues and societal stereotypes. These are popular concerns that most of us recognize. If we could bring ourselves into the gallery—as intimidating and uncomfortable as it may be—and give ourselves the permission to look and think for ourselves, I believe we would all get it! At the very least, we would start to formulate questions. Questions are good. Are we asking enough questions of ourselves, of our systems, of our society? (Some people may be, but more and more those people are being dismissed as special interest groups or radicals.)

It is my opinion that the best of Art sets us that example. It asks questions. It encourages us to ask questions. It gets us thinking.

When I walked into the Gallery for the first time to see this exhibition, I had already formed some expectations. I desired to see art work that had obvious connections to craft history, that had the ability to connect in a real and physical way to my life, and work that could move me with its ability to dialogue over a specific cause.

By and large, the causes in "Made For A Cause" are popular and recognizable. I must admit that I ventured into the Gallery expecting a good talking to. What I got was a bit surprising. Often pleasantly so, but in some areas vaguely unsatisfying.

Many of the works are simple, straightforward, and very successful in the artists' handling of medium, craftsmanship, and message. The artist's bias is clear within the work. Some, like Charley Farrero's, are abrupt, brutal, and direct: a naked frontal female torso adorned with automobile trim entitled *American Dream* (1994). A slap-in-the-face reminder to me that even after two decades of contemporary feminist activism, there are still men out there whose response to this object would be, "Hey, I'll buy that and hang it in my office/shop/locker/cabin," and that there are still women who would not find that disgusting. In this particular situation, I will take the fact that the point is being presented by a man as encouraging.

Anne Marie Buchmann-Gerber's multi-media painting is simple and subtle—shapes of women and horses, pleasant pastel palette, calmly floating composition—and a title that packs the punch: *Women and Mares—The Estrogen Connection #4* (1994). This work throws out a whole nest of questions around women's issues with the medical system, societies attitudes towards the aging

of women, and how we view menopause.

But is this a piece of craft? Is this not a painting? Sure, there is some stitchery; but it is mostly paint on stretched canvas. Sometimes these labels and definitions get really confusing. The curator feels that craft work (that of works having use and function) should be looked at in a much broader way. That it all can be art I have no argument. But when the statement posted in the gallery space calls the artists or makers *craftspeople*, and the art or work *craft*, we start to get tangled up in layers of definitions and labels. In my mind, much of the work in the show, if shown outside of this context, would never be referred to as craft. For example, Pat Doig's *Clear-Cutting the Ocean* (1994) is a rough, raw sculptural work of rusted metal, where a crudely-snipped tin fish tries desperately to swim through the rusted top of a can only to be released into a sea of twisted barbed wire. This work speaks so simply, yet

strongly, to issues of pollution, waste, and exploitation of the world's natural environment without making any obvious historical references to metal craft. The meaning it so strongly communicates does not need to be supported by any insider information on art, or craft, or history.

Not all of the works are that easily read; and sometimes that is to their advantage. The skilled use of materials and the poetic possibilities presented gently encourage the viewer to further contemplation. Works like Anita Rocamora's *Free at Last* (1994) and Michael Hosaluk's *Family Wreath* (1993) both use an eclectic mix of interesting and, for some, unlikely artistic materials. As a viewer, I feel invited to investigate this work visually, while mentally posing some questions and contemplating possible meaning. The serenity, and almost mournful quality of Rocamora's work, had me experiencing pain and compassion on one hand; while Hosaluk's playful mix of materials, color, and pictograms had my eyes skipping to its own particular beat. That both of these works were grouped together with other works that address the state of humankind in the world, such as Kaija Sanelma Harris's tapestry *Bringing in the New World Order* (1991) and Madeleine Arkell's *The Thirst* (1994), is a testimony to me that life is a complex and painfully revealing experience.

With a title like "Made For A Cause" I had been set up to look for social meaning in every work, but I was not always satisfied with what I gathered.

Much of the work offered incredible visual pleasure. The works of Lee Brady and Jamie Russell offer expert handling of the materials and careful attention to the aesthetics—which I found really attractive—but the "cause" as expressed by the artist's statement was impossible for me to gather from the work. Of course, I am only one viewer; and it certainly cannot be expected that all art work would speak to all viewers. The work would then be reduced to little more than the average newspaper. But in this case, I feel that the artists' statements pushed against the work. If I had been left to my own conclusions, I would have found the work more satisfying. Instead, I felt expected to see what they told me was there and I was frustrated when I couldn't.

Now with Sandy Ledingham's piece, *There's a Bright Dawn* (1994), I did find that the statement and the piece did work well together. The text complemented and supported the work. I didn't, however, see the connection to the shelf apparatus that supported

the piece on the wall. As with Madeleine Arkell's shelf, it did not seem necessarily specific to the work and any number of support structures could have been appropriate.

I do feel quite a bit of ambivalence around these inconsistent artists' statements that were—and sometimes were not—mounted beside the art works. It was not made clear to the viewer that the artists were given the choice of having—or not having—a statement posted, and I personally found this rather confusing. The contribution the statements made was varied. Some of the work was enriched by the accompanying text, while other works became confusing. Many did not need the artist's comments; yet with others, I would have found statements helpful. All in all, I found them more problematic than not. I think they should have been done consistently and possibly as a collaboration between artist and curator.

Back to the work itself. Some of it I found too simplistic. Susan Robertson's ceramic piece *Food, Clothing, and Shelter: The Basic Necessities of Life* (1994) does not go far enough in its exploration around issues of poverty in our society. Where does the artist sit within this issue? How is she herself connected to the problems of the poor and homeless? Although the juxtaposing of food vessels (cookie jars) masquerading as buildings—which stage the description of the problem—is clever, I think this piece, unfortunately, does little more than state the fact.

Cecile Miller's work *Master of Perception* (1994), talks to us about TV, which I agree, is a powerful force in today's society. It is not going to go away. We are not going to turn it off as long as it turns us on. And as long as we accept the representations TV presents to us solely at their face value, we remain susceptible to its power. Are we all just TV victims? The question is how and where are such representations to be contested. Has TV not given art a real opportunity as a site for critical thought?

With other work, I was just totally confused as to what was trying to be said. Shirley Spidla's tapestry, *From the White Meadow* (1994), although interestingly woven, left me with many questions and few possible resolutions. The images must have been about something—a woman in a field of flowers with names and dates all about. Should I be recognizing this? I felt excluded, and the gothic-like imagery did not compensate me in my inability to understand. If an art work leaves me with no access, no way in, it just leaves me frustrated. Could that be the desired effect?

Many of the works were very gentle and lacking mystery in their approach to the viewer. Helen Cooke's carved clay work, *The Legacy* (1994), imitated a wooden altarpiece and was certainly not a hit-you-in-the-face-with-the-message work. In fact, I had to look twice before I really saw the image for what it was. The scene is rendered in a realistic relief style where the figures of the children and the gentle colors make the first impression. It was on my second pass through the gallery that I noticed the backgrounds. A subtle and thoughtful work.

Also subtle in a more colorful and playful way is Barbara Goretzky's *Sea Garden* (1994). The point she makes, as described in her statement about integrity of the ecological system, is supported beautifully in the three-panel wall work.

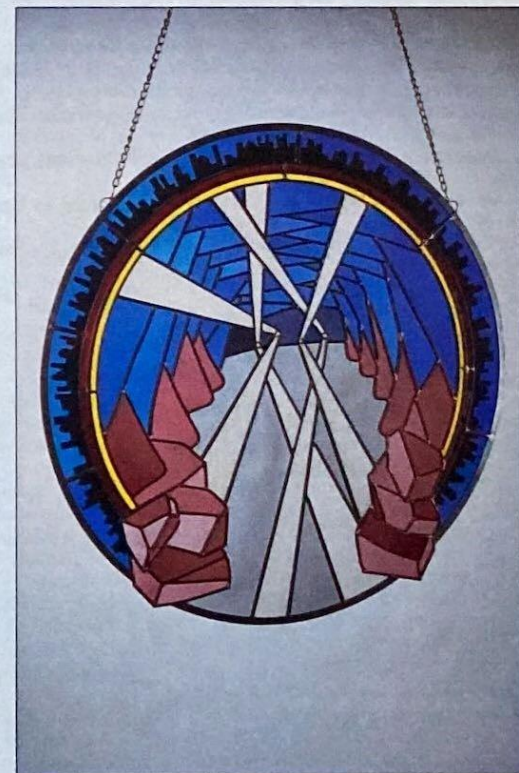
There were some works in this exhibition that I found somewhat problematic; ironically, for rather opposing reasons. Both Sandy Dumba and Susan Andrews Grace wrote strongly focused statements. In the case of Dumba's burial urns, I was not convinced. The urns are exquisite and do make logical sense with the statement; but for some reason, I doubted that all the artist's work contained this concern for land use. It is my experience that when a "cause" becomes important to a person, it comes out in all that they do. This is said with no knowledge whatsoever of Dumba's

work outside of this exhibition. Am I way off base? If so, I apologize. The work of Madeleine Arkell is similarly functional and comes out of historical traditions; yet there is a simplistic contemporary application of content that, to some extent, works—a bit less of a stretch than Dumba's.

In a similar—yet different—way, I was troubled by Susan Andrews Grace's work, *Crucified Bags: Girls Just Want to Have Fun* (1994). I am convinced of the sincerity of her concern, but the work demonstrates such anger and frustration in all the tangled threads and cloths that I, as viewer, am left with literally no room to get into the piece. I was pleased to see someone using textiles in their work and I had wished to see more work connected to that tradition, but I feel Andrews Grace's point would have been better made with stricter editing.

I commend Bob Whittaker for *Shift's End* (1994) that recognizes the issues of labor in our society. This work will resonate for many. Marigold Cribb's paper work, *Revel in the Currents* (1994), seemed tenuous and experimental, but nonetheless complex. A promising, but as yet unresolved, direction. Also using paper, but with a much different purpose, Monika Wildeman's *Water Child* (1994) left me longing for a more overt statement regarding her environmental sensitivities. For example, Kaija Sanelma Harris makes a strong point by presenting us with elements that at first seem at cross

**OPPOSITE** *Sea Garden* (1994), clay, raku glazes, mason stains, slab built, raku fired, 75 cm in width, by Barbara Goretzky  
**BELOW** *Shift's End* (1994), glass, lead, stained glass with zinc and lead overlay, 84 cm in diameter, by Bob Whittaker





purposes—images of war painstaking woven in a fine tapestry. Why? we wonder, and with wonder we explore further—potentially to personal resolution.

Issue-based art work that carries overt meaning within its forms is difficult for many. Some argue that the true formal qualities of art—the aesthetics—get left in the wake of a flood of didactics. Art work that really does it for me is work that is simple and direct without being simplistic or didactic. Work where the artist has subtly married the medium with the meaning so that neither exists without the other. That is my bias as viewer.

I came to this exhibition with those expectations and desires already in place; but I am only one viewer and this exhibition was curated for many different possibilities, and it does have that to offer.

As organizers, viewers, and makers, we may have developed or discovered a wider awareness of the possibilities of social expression within art making. We may have opened some doors to further exploration and formulated some new questions or expectations that we will continue to look for. We may begin to look more closely at the whole notion of communication.

There are no universal methods or means in which to communicate. This exhibition offers a view to that variety and it comes from a position of first asking questions. I commend the Saskatchewan Craft Council and Sandra Flood for the parts they have played in this much-needed exploration.

We, as artists, must continue to search for the richer meaning, must look for the deeper understanding; and as responsible members in this society, we then must ask hard questions of ourselves and our place in the larger scheme of things. This exhibition is a first step.

Noreen Neu was born in Saskatchewan and currently lives and works in Saskatoon. She studied at The Alberta College of Art and the University of Saskatchewan. With a major in Textiles and Drawing, as well as Philosophy and Art History, her current work as an artist is mostly multimedia installation and video. Noreen Neu has recently been appointed Head of Public Programs at the Mendel Art Gallery.



**TOP** *Food, Clothing, and Shelter: The Basic Necessities of Life* (1994), porcelain, polychromatic oil paint, acrylic sealer, handbuilt, cone 6, 33 centimetres in height (each), by Susan Robertson.

**BOTTOM** *Communal Abode* (1994), porcelain, metallic glaze, handbuilt and thrown, cone 6 oxidation 43.5x27x15 centimetres, by Sandy Dumba.

# Is Bias Binding Contemporary Textile Work?

BY SUSAN ANDREWS GRACE

Over-reaction and condemnation of original thought happens in all art forms but it seems to take on a peculiar flavour when it comes to textile work. Sometimes respect for tradition and sentimentality regarding the past are mistaken for each other. Respect for tradition, in textile work, often has a lot to do with assumptions about gender and who is expected to do such work. This confusion often leads to condemnation of anyone who tries to use cloth in new ways, that is ways not recognizable by the majority of people and especially if the perpetrator is a woman. I think I know why this is.

There is a power in textiles that I hesitate to write about in *The Craft Factor* because it may cause a lot of disruption. When they find out about this power the wood guys may start quilting, the clay types may smash their pots into corners and take up weaving, and the goldsmiths may start crocheting chain. Who knows.

I first noticed the phenomenon in 1987 when Judith Fretz and I organized the construction of a peace quilt by 60 Saskatoon mothers for the International Year of Peace. When we installed it in City Hall before it was to leave for the UN in New York I witnessed men approaching the quilt, which was beautiful beyond any usual measure of textile work, and weeping. In Saskatoon! The same thing happened in New York when we went to receive the Peace Messenger award. (I in turn wept in front of a black & white photograph of two little kids sitting in the middle of a dusty road.)

When people approach textile work, expecting mothers to be making soft, cuddly things, they are horrified by work which employs barbed wire and razor blades with wedding veil for example. They get angry when they see fine embroidery on patchwork with crooked seams, using fabric usually relegated to the linings of garments. An example of this occurred recently when a

(male) critic from the Stitchery Guild in Regina wrote about work by Suzanne Evans, a Saskatoon-based member of the Saskatchewan Craft Council and graduate of Concordia University's Fibres program. It was a quilt not unlike the work described above and which was part of "The Next Generation: Saskatoon" exhibited at the Rosemont Art Gallery in February of 1994. He was horrified at the disrespect she showed to people like your's and my grandmothers.

**The double bind is that if you work with cloth, it's expected because you're a woman and if you do anything unusual with cloth, people get upset.**

And yet when Evans took the work to the Melville Quilting show she had a wonderful time with the older women who quilt, who appreciated that she had appreciated the tradition so well. They understood what she was saying and that she had found a new way of going about it. They laughed with delight when they looked closely at that quilt. They knew damn well what it was about. They lived it first. You have to know the rules to break them. And that doesn't necessarily mean that you have to have sewn your way, using the running stitch, to Yorkton to know the rules of quilt construction.

Why is work which looks like a machine made it, (it's so "regular" and so "perfect"), most valuable?

There is a prejudice and a double bind in contemporary textile work in Saskatchewan. (May I be so "punacious" as to suggest a

continuous double bias bind?) Perfection is demanded by the marketplace and the Saskatchewan Craft Council is the marketplace, to quite an extent. It is where showcase work finds its final resting place. There is little reward for such work and so there is a great deal of anxiety and insecurity among the makers/marketers of such work.

Craftspeople are supposed to turn out perfect work for a marketplace which barely exists. Craftspeople are supposed to honour tradition in one way only, by producing more and more perfect things, to defy machine-made things and ignore the way consumers really behave. We profess to believe this.

People who work in textiles honour the work that has gone before them, almost always. It would be hard to find one who doesn't and it starts at the beginning. You don't need to be a rocket scientist to realize that hand-piecing a quilt would take most of one and maybe two TV-less winters. However, a respect on the part of a maker for the painstaking work which was once part of survival for example quilts which kept children from being frostbitten while they slept, is not the same as sentimental ideas on the part of a viewer. There's a big difference.

Some people who work in textiles have thought about it with such depth and breadth and with so much respect for the tradition among those women who have gone before us, making history with cloth, that they have decided to upset more than one appletart and go for imperfection big time, as the adolescents at my house would put it. They see the conventional meaning of textile work in our society as a comfort, an attitude that is too narrow in a world where machine-made objects are so prevalent that almost no one can claim to own something made by someone they know, let alone love. People like to look at quilts, for example, and think warm thoughts about their grandmas who made quilts like that, little perfect stitch after little perfect stitch sewing up a

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## IS BIAS BINDING CONTEMPORARY TEXTILE WORK?

cozy picture of life in the past. No one wants to think of their grandmas as victims of domestic rape, for example. No. Not nice.

Sometimes the meaning in textile work is tough and confrontational. And when it is, the reaction in this province is often one of killing the messenger because the message causes too much discomfort. However, people in other parts of the world have been doing powerful textile work for years and have been getting away with it. Elizabeth Busch, who (lucky for her) lives in the republic to the south, has been "failing" to bind her quilts for at least a decade. In Saskatchewan, she would have been nailed to the cross for such a transgression, the cross of the mitred corner. But she carries on, convinced it is important in this world to do such an audacious thing.

Craftspeople have been misunderstood and neglected in the art world. They are like a lot of other marginalized groups who tend to "eat their young". The failure of the market mindset in the craft world should allow for a little leniency when craftspeople wish to use their medium and expertise to respond to this world we all have to live in. Sometimes this response may come deliberately disturbing, in a ratty manner with raggy edges. It may require crooked or large stitches. It may speak with eloquence because it speaks of the memory of love with a memory of the hand in cloth. Because of

expectations in the viewer of propriety in persons who use cloth and stitchery, (people just like Grandma), there seems to be an assumption of drunkenness, insanity and finally the biggest sin of all, disrespect, on the part of such a maker, who may be alerting the viewer to things such as domestic rape, which of course never happened to Grandma. The craft community could perhaps alert itself to the fact that there are textile types out there attempting to subvert an establishment which ignores the handmade and it might just be a good thing for us all. And they sure as heck aren't going to get a piece of the market-pie, so why sweat the small stuff? Or is it such small stuff?

The double bind is that if you work with cloth, it's expected because you're a woman and if you do anything unusual with cloth, people get upset. Which is a good thing if you want viewers to think about why you devote your life and work to something that is so marginal/ized. If you're a man working with cloth it's expected you wouldn't do the work yourself and isn't it amazing that you thought of it at all, aren't you sensitive?

The language of cloth cannot be used the same way as it has been used in the past, if it is to honestly respond to this time and world. To emulate the values of the handmade and to honour them is to use the process in new ways, to communicate new meaning and for new reasons. This cannot

be done by aping or copying old products.

The medium truly is the message in this case. A new time requires a new approach to reflection and emulation of time-honoured aspects of textile work such as thrift, community effort, efficacious design, and proof of the human hand.

Susan Andrews Grace is a Saskatoon-based freelance writer and fibre artist.



### WOOD SCULPTURE '95

July 8 - 23, 1995

#### Concurrent Events

July 8 Forest Workshops  
July 10 - 20 Invitational Carving Symposium  
July 15 - 16 Public Craft Workshops  
July 21 - 23 Ness Creek Music Festival

Site: Ness Creek Festival Grounds,  
20 kms northeast of Big River, SK

Contributing organizations:  
Prairie Sculptors' Association Inc.  
Saskatchewan Forest Conservation Network  
Farm Woodlot Association of Saskatchewan  
Ness Creek Cultural & Recreational Society  
Saskatchewan Craft Council

# Saskatchewan Craft Gallery

## Schedule

### IN THE GALLERY

#### KAIJA SANELMA HARRIS "Veiled Images"

An exhibition of woven quilts  
March 10 to April 18, 1995

#### GALLERY CLOSED

"Dimensions '95" Jurying  
April 19 to 25, 1995

#### "GLASS FIRST"

Exhibition by the Saskatoon Glassworkers Guild  
April 28 to June 13, 1995  
Public Reception: Friday, April 28, 7 to 9 PM  
Artists' Talk: Sunday, April 30, 2 PM

#### SUZANNE EVANS

An installation of Fabric Work  
June 16 to August 1, 1995

### SCC TOURING EXHIBITIONS

(partial listings)

#### "MADE FOR A CAUSE"

Curated by Sandra Flood  
Organized by the Saskatchewan Craft Council

Allie Griffin Art Gallery, Weyburn, SK  
March 13 to April 30, 1995

Little Gallery, Prince Albert, SK  
June 5 to July 3, 1995

### SCC TOURING EXHIBITIONS (cont.)

Moose Jaw Art Museum, Moose Jaw, SK  
July 11 to August 20, 1995

#### DIMENSIONS '95

Annual open juried exhibition of Saskatchewan craft  
Organized by the Saskatchewan Craft Council  
Jurors: Sandra Flood and Lloyd E. Herman

Mackenzie Art Gallery, Regina  
June 9 to July 2, 1995

Alex Dillabough Centre, Battleford, SK  
July 14 to 16, 1995

### JOINT SCC/OSAC TOURING EXHIBITION

#### "CRAFT COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS II"

Includes furniture by Jamie Russell,  
tapestries by Annabel Taylor, quilts by Lynn Underwood,  
and clay works by Ardin Howard

Allie Griffin Art Gallery, Weyburn, SK  
April 1 to 23, 1995

Biggar Museum & Gallery, Biggar, SK  
May 1 to 23, 1995

Jasper Cultural Centre, Maple Creek, SK  
June 1 to 23, 1995

Grand Coteau Centre, Shaunavon, SK.  
July 1 to 23, 1995

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