

Meeting Notes - March 24, 2018 - Gallery 53, Meriden

We had 32 members in attendance, including two who were first-timers to our meetings!

Thanks to [Cathy Smith](#) for working diligently with [Gallery 53](#) (Meriden CT) on the upcoming Textile Show, "All Things Considered". It was so easy to be able to drop off work downstairs, then pop up to the meeting. We are grateful for the use of the meeting space and the chance to exhibit our work. The exhibition reception will be Saturday, April 14th, from 12-2pm. Prizes/awards will be announced. If possible, please bring something sweet to share. (If you want a sneak peek at the show, the gallery will be having their 10th annual Wine Tasting and 5th annual Chair-ity event Friday April 13th from 6-9p. \$15 in advance; \$20 at the door.) And don't forget, removal dates for this exhibition are Friday, April 27 (12-3p) and Saturday, April 28 (10a-1p).

Once we officially commenced the meeting, we headed straight into a panel discussion, led by our Working in a Series group, including [Dawn Allen](#), [Christina Blais](#), Dwight Lopes, [Clara Nartey](#), [Cathy Smith](#), [Kate Themel](#), and [Carol Vinick](#) and Carol Capozzeli.

[Carol Eaton](#) was instrumental in facilitating the group's incarnation, giving focus and rise to conversations. Once she abandoned us for Colorado, the group was able to continue on leaderlessly, but with Dwight as a coordinator, with different members stepping up to find locations to meet and occasionally relying on Zoom for virtual meetings. Christina particularly liked being able to meet from the comfort of her own home sipping coffee, while still getting that feedback and togetherness of the group.

Dwight mentioned that the group explored more than just working in a series. Other topics covered were how to market yourself and how to get into galleries, and that talking with others helped clarify personal goals. Kate said that half the group had never worked in a series before, so initial meetings started with discussing what that meant to each of them. She took the idea as working on one piece at a time, and taking something from that piece to jumpstart the next one. Carol Vinick was a reluctant convert to creating a "cohesive body of work", but meeting with the group really pulled together many of her pieces, got her focused, and greatly increased her participation in exhibitions. Kate then commented that the thing about a cohesive body of work is just that it's your body of work, and eventually you see that it's YOURS.

[Cathy Smith](#) walked us through her journey, using examples of her work along the way. She started with "Transfusion" because she wanted to hand quilt something and wanted to work in red. From there, she went larger. And larger still. She has more recently started trying to work small and in standard sizes and using duplicate snippets of some of her larger works. A few tidbits were: some [Michael's Crafts](#) stores carry [black canvas](#), which she uses cement glue to adhere velcro squares to the corners and to the back of the quilt, then wires the canvas for hanging; she learned from the symposium at the [Art Quilt Elements](#) exhibition at the [Wayne Art Center](#) that some of the "big" names, like [Betty Busby](#), work on MULTIPLE series at a time.

Cathy's most important points were that by working in a series, you will work on ideas of your choosing, you will have very little "down time" between pieces, and you will create more art.

We went totally tangential into a discussion regarding the Textile Fiber Day on Saturday May 5, 2018 at the [Windham Textile & History Museum](#). Our [Local Color 3: Inspired By Science](#) exhibition (and trunk show) will be on display. There will be textile vendors, speakers, panel discussions and demonstrations, including the Mothers Against Gun Violence quilts and quilters. For more information, you can email [Cathy](#) or [Joan Blade Johnson](#).

One theme was echoed by multiple members of the group:

"There's not as much slacking off in between (pieces) because if you have a series, you already have a spark of something. You don't have to wait for inspiration." - Kate

"You think beyond what you're doing now." -Cathy

"You always have something to work on. There's no 'I don't know what to create next'." -Clara

Carol Capozzoli then exemplified this with a different twist. It's about showing up and putting in the mental work, not necessarily (or only) in finishing pieces. She spoke of her process and she's currently working on trying different techniques as her "series".

[Dawn Allen](#) said that Working in a Series has been wildly successful for her. She had just finished up making her 3D fabric flowers and the group helped push her to create an abundance of work. She has now been published in two car magazines. Vendors she uses include [Spoonflower](#) for fabric, [Bay Photo](#) and [White House](#) for other materials. One interesting thing Dawn discovered while working through two different series is that it's not fun to do art that you don't like at all. She does similar processes for both her vintage cars and pet portraits, but her interest level is so varied between the two.

[Christina Blais](#) walked us through her series process of holes (wholes?) and how it led her to "Quilt the Blues".

Don't miss

<https://player.vimeo.com/video/173819399>

on the about Working in a Series with Juried Artist Member panelists Sue Bleiweiss, Lorie McCown and Judy Kirpich.

Diane Wright is working hard on the [Guilford Art Center](#) to increase their investment in fiber art. She needs our help! If anyone is interested/able to teach some fiber art classes (paid!), [send her an email](#) dwrite@mac.com

Though she was not in attendance at this meeting because she was in Morocco, Jan Doyle will be our new regional co-representative!! Yay Jan!

[Mary Lachman](#) has agreed to update the blog! [Send any news, info, photos \(jpgs, please\), etc to her](#) lachmanmf@aol.com

Roz Spann is our retreat coordinator. More on the retreat below.

[Kelly Lorraine](#) is now officially retired from her term as our regional co-rep, but will continue to be the meeting secretary.

[Christina](#) also noted that she will be retiring in 6 months, so if anyone has even the vaguest inclination they might be interested in being a SAQA co-rep, please let her know.

Going forward, we are getting out of the food business. Be sure to bring your own lunch, drinks, snacks, etc. to any future meetings.

If you are having Local Connections/Pods meetings, please appoint a liaison from your group to keep Christina and Jan in the know about your meetings. We need certain information (numbers of meetings, numbers of attendees, etc) so that we can report back to “mothership” SAQA, as they like to have a pulse on how the organization as a whole is doing. We have a wonderful and vibrant region here in CT, so we’d like to be able to brag to the fullest. ;)

As our raffle days are now over, we are going to try a swap table. Bring whatever, take whatever. Free. Any leftovers will go to [Savers](#) in Manchester. Savers benefits the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program.

[Local Color](#) 3: Inspired By Science’s next venue will be the [Windham Textile & History Museum](#) (as previously noted). If you are interested in ordering an exhibition catalog, sit tight. A second edition (with some edits) is in the works and should be available shortly through [Amazon](#) (note that this link is currently showing the FIRST edition, but you should be able to find the second edition here, once it is ready for publishing).

Our first SAQA-CT regional retreat will be November 2–4 at the [Incarnation Center](#) in Ivoryton. Cost will be approximately \$250, which includes housing, meals, and an individual table set up for your sewing pleasure in the communal meeting room. Rooms available are 30 singles and 7 doubles. After some discussion, it was determined that as our first retreat ever, we’re going to keep it as simple as possible, so there will be no outside speaker. The vocal majority (if not, the unanimous whole) would like a relaxed, unstructured environment to work in. Some goals for the retreat include getting to know people better, having the space and ability for critique (for those interested), and being able to ask questions and learn from each other. To that last point, it would be helpful to keep in mind one or two things that you do uniquely or might be particularly skilled at, to share with the group, possibly with a sentence or two upfront about it during registration so that others might know what topical knowledge might be available. Overall programming will be minimal, with [Kate Themel](#) assisting in facilitation. Registration details are still to follow, but will be enacted by Meredith Brooks. Roz Spann is our retreat coordinator.

[Christina Blais](#) kicked off our Show and Tell. She recently made a transition to creating abstracts. She showed us a magnificent colored vase of flowers, with a graphic black and white background, quilted in pink circles. In the spirit of Working in a Series, she is now working on another.

Lois Palmer is a quilt appraiser, and this year's [PAAQT](#) conference is here in Mystic, CT. As part of their programming, they bring in local quilters to speak about what is being created in the quilt world (as less than 50% of the quilt appraisal business is antique), and she is so thrilled to see many of our members involved and excited and creating wonderful work.

Based on previously mentioned quilts by Mothers Against Gun Violence at the Textile Fiber Day, Kathy Bagioni spoke briefly about making quilts and travel stoles/vestments out of clothing of victims of 9/11. It is extremely emotional and difficult work, but very rewarding. Then she showed us the first piece she's ever painted, titled, "21st-Century Whole Cloth Quilt". It was part of a challenge to honor female artist by creating a quilt in the style of the artist, in this case, Georgia O'Keefe.

[Kate Themel](#) is excited for the Gallery 53 exhibition, as it's the first time she's exhibiting one of her wearables, a valkyrie (Norse warrior angel) costume she made. Some unusual construction details include moldable plastic and 3D printing, spray painted to look like metal.

Alicia Caraballo (a member of [SDA](#) and now a new member to SAQA) showed us two pieces. The first piece started with organza that she clamped (like in shibori), then degummed (a process that removes the sizing), then felted. Then she exhibited a piece of silk done with deconstructed screen printing. The patterning included letterforms created using screenprinting paste in a syringe.

Meredith Brooks showed us a beautiful triptych, based in her love and experiences as a gardener. The piece showed corn, beans, and squash. She also noted that she recently visited the [Handmade: Women Reshaping Contemporary Art show](#) at the [Westport Art Center](#) and it was wonderful, so don't miss it!

Evelyn Oliver Knight will be doing a talk on fiber arts to some teenagers through her sorority.

[Joan Blade Johnson](#) has her first solo show at the [UConn Homer Babbidge Library](#) through May 14th.

Carol Capozzoli made a baby quilt.

[Clara Nartey](#) showed us a new piece she did as a whole cloth quilt (no piecing). [She wanted it to look like pencil drawing, and it was done completely with stitching. She then made a second piece of the same design in color.](#) For inquiring minds, she uses felt as her batting.

Barb Adams has been “working in a series” on baby quilts. ;)

[Laura Bundesen](#), neurofiber artist, currently has a solo show at the [Westhampton Library](#) (1 North Road). The closing reception is this Saturday, 3/31, from 10a-noon.

[Mickey Lawler](#) has [three openings left in her class](#) at [Quilting by the Lake](#). Don’t miss out - register today.

[Diane Cadrain](#) has been teaching felting and teaches quilting (along with [Carol Vinick](#)) at the [Chrysalis Center](#). She (along with [Phyllis Small](#)) has work in the [Connecticut Women Artists](#) show, at the [Art League of New Britain](#) April 4–May 4. The work is an acrylic-painted whole-cloth quilt titled, “Heaven on Earth”. She has recently started working on small scale samples towards a piece for the exhibition [Explorations: Journeys in Creativity](#), which requires her to document her materials and her process. Follow the journey on her blog, [starting here](#).

Rita Hannafin showed us a piece in an upcoming exhibition based on joyous photograph. She used the image of the photo to form a black fabric silhouette and placed it against a watercolor background. She also inspired us all to root around in our stashes and UFOs (UnFinished Objects), as she just delivered/donated a piece using parts that she started 15 years ago! She also pointed out that her favorite way of finishing pieces is by wrapping the canvas.

Diane Wright showed us two pieces from her Sentinels series. All pieces in the series (including some done by others in her quilt group) started with black print on orange fabric. In the first piece, she hand stitched decorative parts (including french knots) and expanded the composition. The second piece was machine stitched.