



Quilt National 2025

CONTENTS

HERE: Sarah Spencer,
Queen of Swords
(detail) See page 14

8	FOREWORD
9	INTRODUCTION
10	JURORS
18	AWARDS
34	QUILTS
108	THE DAIRY BARN ARTS CENTER





FOREWORD

For more than 40 years, the artists of Quilt National have pushed the boundaries of quilting, celebrating the diversity and dynamic nature of the art form. Quilt National '25 continues this legacy, showcasing works that highlight innovation, technical mastery, and artistic voice. Over the decades, the exhibition has become a global stage for contemporary quilting, inspiring artists and audiences alike with its commitment to creativity and excellence.

This year, our jurors—Ellen Blalock, LUKE Haynes, and Martha Sielman—selected 84 quilts from 659 submissions, each bringing their own bold talent and expertise. The quilts you'll see in this exhibition reflect the broad range of ideas and styles that define modern quilting. Whether addressing current social themes, experimenting with innovative materials, or simply reveling in the beauty of color, texture, and form, these quilts are a testament to the vitality and versatility of this art form.

We are especially proud to feature 27 first-time Quilt National exhibitors, whose work brings fresh perspective and energy. These new voices, alongside returning artists, represent the future of contemporary quilting.

Quilt National is a labor of love, requiring the passion and dedication of many. From the artists who pour their hearts into their work to the volunteers, staff, and generous sponsors who make it all possible, this exhibition is a collaborative effort in every sense. I extend my deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to Quilt National '25, with special thanks to Quilt National coordinator Kerri Ann Wolfe for her tireless commitment to making this exhibit a success. Her work behind the scenes is invaluable, ensuring that this exhibition continues to meet the high standards our audiences have come to expect.

As we celebrate 46 years of Quilt National, this exhibition serves as both a reflection of how far we've come and a glimpse of the exciting possibilities that lie ahead. Each piece tells a story, not only of the artist's vision but also of the transformative power of quilts. It is my honor to invite you to experience this extraordinary collection and to celebrate the incredible talents that make Quilt National a cornerstone of the contemporary art world.

LEAH MAGYARY
Executive Director



HERE: Willy Doreleijers,
Ecological Living
(detail). See page 51.



INTRODUCTION

Congratulations to this year's Quilt National '25 artists! What a thrilling moment it must be to receive that email notification saying you've been selected for Quilt National. I love hearing from the artists, whether it's their first time being chosen or they've been a part of the exhibition for decades; their excitement is always resounding. I often wonder what makes this exhibition so special. Is it the long-standing history and traditions? The joy of seeing your work at The Dairy Barn on opening weekend? Or perhaps the length and far-reaching nature of the traveling exhibition? Regardless, Quilt National offers a unique experience that many quilting artists dream of, and I feel honored to be the one to send out the acceptance emails.

But the acceptance emails are only one small part of my journey with these wonderful quilts. I eagerly await the days that I get to unpack newly arrived pieces selected for Quilt National. It's such a special moment to unbox and reveal the details, the intricate stitches, subtle shifts in color, and the forms of the new and innovative quilting techniques. I see these quilts submitted, reviewed and critiqued, selected for show and awards, unpacked, and hung for exhibition. I get to know them well! By the show's opening, I feel I have a special connection to each quilt. My job is truly special; I'm so grateful for the time I get to enjoy these pieces and I thank the artists, patrons, and Dairy Barn staff for making it all happen.

I extend heartfelt thanks to our jurors, Martha, LUKE, and Ellen, for their dedication and thoughtful debates while selecting this year's 84 Quilt National '25 artists. Their hard work in curating the collection is truly appreciated. I'm also grateful to our director, Leah Magyary, for her unwavering commitment, our facilities manager, Reid Secoy, for ensuring the show runs smoothly, and the Quilt National committee for their efforts to keep the exhibition fresh and engaging. Lastly, I thank all 370 artists who applied this year; with only 84 selected, it's a competitive process. Your dedication and creativity are the heart of Quilt National. Congratulations to the chosen artists!

KERI ANN WOLFE
Exhibitions Director/
Quilt National Coordinator

ELLEN BLALOCK

I love quilts—all quilts. I love making them. I love talking about them, singing about them, cuddling under them whether it's hot or cold, and spreading them on the grass for a picnic. Quilts have a special place in my soul. So, it was my sincere pleasure to serve as one of the three jurors for Quilt National 2025. I get the pleasure from knowing I am one of the first to see and jury 659 amazing quilts from around the world for the 2025 exhibition at The Dairy Barn. What a joy this was for me to be invited for such a task. Quilt National has an impressive history of celebrating and rewarding new visions and innovations in the quilt medium. There is even an award for Most Innovative Use of Material, which Jongkyeong Lee received for the way she uses a soldering iron to fuse fabrics.

The first round of judging took place in the solitude of my studio. I slowly went through the quilts several times on my computer's large 4K gaming monitor. I clicked on detail photos. I enlarged areas and read statements about the quilts. There were a few instances when I was trying to judge quilts with poorly taken photos—out of focus and/or with color shifts from the overall image to the details. In the final round, one quilt was discussed at length but did not make it through the final cut because we could not adequately judge it when there were so many other quilts of excellence.

The next round, in front of my large computer screen, LUKE Haynes, Martha Seelman, and I met for the first time on Zoom with our Dairy Barn hosts Ken Ann Wolfe, Quilt National coordinator, and Leah Magyary, executive director. After a quick introduction, we got busy. We were down to about 200 quilts from our personal selections, and, as a team, we had to get it down to 84 for the exhibition. I think I am not overstepping if I say within the first hour we respected and liked one another and brought our experience, knowledge, curiosity, tenacity, and sensibilities. We agreed on many and discussed why. The ones we disagreed on, we talked about. The stitch battles always turned into a fabric dance as we discussed quilts. We wanted to show many approaches to the medium of quilting. We wanted to cut through traditional ways of thinking, and yet respectfully honor traditional techniques used in creative ways. We agreed to show the best work and the best samples of excellence in contemporary quilts. We agreed to reflect the diversity of the submissions.

On the second day, we reviewed our 84 choices for the 2025 exhibition. We were pleased. Next, we chose the award winners. We respectfully

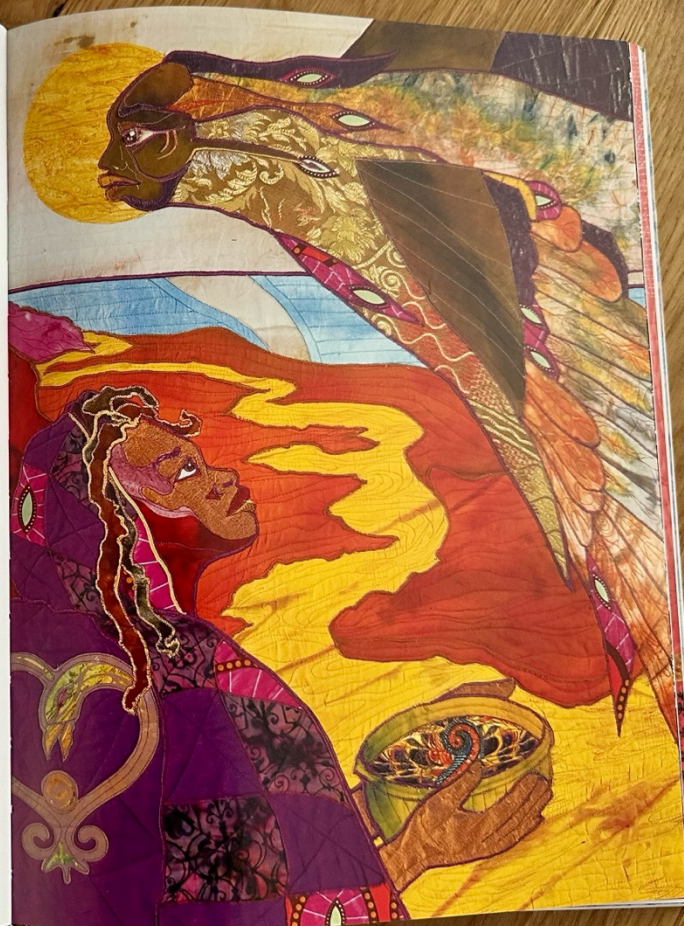
agreed. In the judging process, our personal preferences came to light. Martha would say to me, "Ellen, I know you like this quilt." We would laugh. She was right. We all knew what our fellow jurors were drawn to. I like holes and circles, Martha likes birds, and LUKE likes grids and plaids. We balanced each other well, always ready for the stitch battle and fabric dance.

My Juror's Award choice was important to me. Most people who know me will tell you that blue is not my color. Even my wardrobe lacks blue jeans because of the color. The quilt I chose is blue: *Will You Love Me When I'm Blue* by Tania Tanti, of Australia. This quilt is whole cloth, painted, using both free-motion quilting and hand stitching. I respond to how Tanti used composition and color to frame and balance the cropped head-and-shoulder figure to inform the narrative. The figure is isolated in a brown cave-like shape, suggesting protection. The monochromatic blue of hard-edge geometric design in the background is contrasted by the soft organic monochromatic blue of the figure. The figure appears to be forming and moldable with the mouth open. Tanti's statement was simple, "Allow me the space to embrace my vulnerability." The blue in this quilt goes beyond the color. It is emotion; it is what "the Blues" is built on—sharing one's vulnerability in telling their truth, their pain, and all.

Overall, I was immediately impressed by many of the 659 quilts. I applaud all the artists and quilters that submitted work. I can easily say that most of the submissions showed impeccable skills of artistry and craftsmanship with unique subjects and narratives. I believe we the jurors successfully built a dynamic exhibition to celebrate fiber art and quilts.



Ellen Blalock, *The River of Knowledge*, 46" x 51.5"; commercial and hand-dyed fabrics, upholstery, silk, cotton, and non-woven material. This is a remembrance quilt to our ancestors. We honor our ancestors when we continue to listen to their wisdom.



LUKE HAYNES

I was a true honor to serve as a juror for Quilt National '25 alongside Ellen Blalock and Martha Sielman. Each of us brought our own varied experiences and perspectives, which led to lively discussions and allowed us to curate a strong and diverse exhibition.

Judging is intrinsically and necessarily biased; it reflects an individual's personal experience and aesthetic preferences. With that in mind, it was rewarding to join my co-jurors in reviewing 659 quilts, from which we selected 84 that we felt showcased the excellence, innovation, and narrative depth of this community. The conversations that unfolded during the judging process were dynamic and at times challenging, but, in the end, we created a compelling narrative through the chosen works.

As an artist who has spent my career exploring the intersections of craft, fine art, and storytelling, I approached the selection process with a focus on craftsmanship, intentionality, and a clear narrative. I found myself drawn to pieces that embodied excellence in the completion of a vision, as well as quilts that evoked a powerful emotional response. For me, a successful quilt is one that makes you feel something—whether it's a sense of wonder, joy, or deep reflection on the human experience.

In particular, I appreciated quilts that demonstrated thoughtful use of scale, color, and composition. These elements, when carefully considered, can elevate a quilt beyond the realm of craft into the realm of fine art. I was moved by how the selected works embraced these qualities, pushing the boundaries of what quilts can express in terms of both artistry and meaning.

It was also exciting to see both returning artists and newcomers bring their own voices to the exhibition. Out of the 84 selected quilts, 27 were from first-time Quilt National artists, and 23 came from international submissions. This diversity of perspectives is what makes Quilt National such a vibrant and evolving platform for the art of quilting.

As always, the process of selecting the best quilts was not easy, and we didn't always agree. But through thoughtful dialogue and collaboration, we reached a consensus that I believe reflects the best of contemporary quilting. Each piece in the exhibition stands as a testament to the skill, creativity, and passion of its maker, and it has been a privilege to be part of this process.



LUKE Haynes, [on my bed #9] Big Me; artist's clothing, cotton batting, recycled sheets and textiles





JUROR

MARTHA SIELMAN

Being a juror has been a dream of mine since I attended my first Quilt National exhibition in 2005. What a thrill to be part of the process for Quilt National '25.

I would like to thank the 370 artists who submitted their work for consideration. It is an act of profound courage to send something that you created out into the world. The high caliber of all the submitted art was very impressive.

Most of the jurying that I have done previously has been as a solo juror. Working as part of a panel was a fascinating experience, and it changed my perspective in some profound ways. Ellen Blalock's approach to comparing each piece in the context not just of the pool of art under consideration but also in the context of the "vernacular" of that type of quilting changed how I viewed the artworks. I stopped looking at the art through a single lens and broadened my view to see each piece as an example of an approach to quilting.

LUKE Haynes' fascination with the technical expertise of the piecing, appliqué, hand stitching, or machine quilting the artist used led me to reconsider works that I had not chosen. Were they made at an equally high level of skill? How should we weigh technical expertise against visual impact? Could a piece be "technically dynamic without being interesting"? Being able to discuss each piece with these experts was an incredibly rich experience, and I will carry their insights with me into future jurying processes.

We three jurors worked hard to choose a rich and diverse exhibition of outstanding art. Hopefully, the viewer will find an exhilarating range of styles, techniques, and experiences. We were focused on choosing work that was intriguing from a distance but also rewarded close viewing.

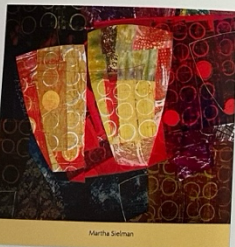
The works chosen range from obsessive handwork to technological marvel, from figurative to geometric, from photographic to abstract. Some of the works introduce novel materials: LED lights, vinyl, shoelaces, and waste fibers. Some of the works are completely handmade, while others are designed on the computer and created with a longarm quilting machine. While most are two-dimensional,

there are a few sculptural pieces that expand the definition of what a quilt should look like.

Each of the pieces we chose has its own unique appeal. Each tells its own story, and each amply rewards time spent looking carefully and examining every detail of its construction. I am looking forward to seeing these works in person at the opening reception. While I have enjoyed seeing them on my computer, at most they were only six-inch squares. In real life, the impact of some of these works will be amazing as some are more than eight feet in both dimensions, and many are five feet or more. As much as the computer makes the jurying process easier, there is nothing to compare with spending one-on-one time in the presence of a work of art.

Thank you to the staff of The Dairy Barn Arts Center for making jurying Quilt National '25 an unforgettable experience.

ART QUILTS INTERNATIONAL Abstract & Geometric

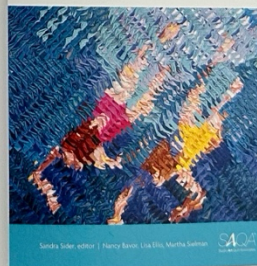


Martha Sielman

Over the 20 years that I've been executive director of Studio Art Quilt Associates (SAQA), I have now written 10 books showcasing the amazing art created by our members. Beginning with *Masters: Art Quilts* (Lark 2008) and ending with *Stitched Journeys with Birds* (Schiffer 2023), I have enjoyed the process of learning about the artists who create in fiber and thread. It is an art form that transcends boundaries and spreads beauty around the world.



Art Quilts Unfolding 50 YEARS OF INNOVATION



Sandra Sider, editor | Nancy Bavin, Lisa Ellis, Martha Sielman



MARTHA SIELMAN



BEST OF SHOW

SPONSORED BY MODA FABRICS + SUPPLIES

SHIN-HEE CHIN
McPherson, Kansas

Viriditas (Greenness)
59" x 72"

Recycled blanket, cotton thread, linen thread, perle cotton, polyester thread
Random weave and stitch (artist's own technique)

The Latin word *Viriditas*, derived from fire, air, water, and earth, embodies the concept that "in the food we eat we are to find a healing ability to maintain healthy nourishment and balance." Hildegard of Bingen, a prominent mystic and philosopher in medieval Europe, often used this Latin term, which encompasses meanings such as greenness, vitality, and abundance. It signifies the life giving power inherent in greenery.

This artwork aims to highlight the profound force of nature, especially the vitality of green life, which inherently possesses beauty.





REGULA AFFOLTER
Davos Dorf, Graubünden, Switzerland

The WEF Extra's #103

29" x 50"

Cotton

Screen-printed, free-motion quilted

Spotlight on the WEF. A parody of the events with glamour, beautiful cars, and VIPs.



MARY ARNOLD
Ridgefield, Washington

Dye Vats

32" x 42"

Hand dyes, batiks

Raw-edge applique, free-motion quilted

Dye Vats is an image taken in Morocco at a leather factory. The arrangement of the pots and the colors of the dyes really caught my attention. I did intensify the dye colors to add richness to the image. Many of the images I use in my work are taken on international and local trips or on walks in my neighborhood.