

Happiness: Quilted Expressions
Curators' Statement

Creativity, innovation and imagination are the hallmarks of the ***Quilt Surface Design Symposium***, an annual two-week international June experience in Columbus, Ohio. Through skilled leadership, the instructors set the environment for the emergence of the best in critical creative productivity. Reaching the potential of one's capabilities and achieving a unique vision comes with a bit of endurance, perseverance and, ultimately, happiness.

We applaud the artists in the Ohio Arts Council's Riffe Gallery exhibition—and those we were not able to show—who have gone the extra mile to experiment, consider and interpret their vision as an art quilt. Whether it is finding the appropriate fabric, augmenting its surface through color or texture, piecing it together, selecting a size, formatting and scaling it to make their intent a reality, it all adds up to a considerable amount of work and inner satisfaction. These artists have honed their skills and techniques, refining their designs to yield a mark of excellence.

We began organizing this exhibition by asking the artists to submit works that represent some aspect of what gives them happiness. We found in their statements that, for them, quilting is a complicated, multi-dimensional emotional experience and appreciated differently by each individual. It may be a sense of contentment, or an appreciation and acknowledgement of one's blessings, or the resolution of a problem. Their happiness may be found in the simple joy of feeling "connected", in the freedom of realizing their uniqueness, or in the excitement of discovering the unknown with all its possibilities and potential.

The artists' works of happiness have been expressed in the quilt medium in various forms. Some have shared their delight by re-creating a scene, capturing a moment in time with a snapshot of a delicious instant in their memory. Others have found their contentment and peace in the actual process of creating their art: the stitching, the sewing, the literal act of translating their viewpoints or feelings into a quilt, be it a political statement, a moment of humor, or a delight in space.

Happiness is a state of mind in which one allows oneself to let it all go. In this exhibition, we are invited into the mood of the moment that surrounded these artists when they experienced their happiness. We invite you to embrace the moment, find something that resonates with your own happiness and enjoy the show!

Linda Fowler and Tracy Rieger