

RIFFE GALLERY



Quilt National '93

An International Exhibition of Contemporary Art Quilts



Ohio Arts Council

October 20, 1994 through January 7, 1995

EIGHT QUILT NATIONAL EXHIBITIONS HAVE BEEN PRODUCED BY THE DAIRY BARN CULTURAL ARTS CENTER; five of them have toured the world. Each one has inspired another tier of excellence, has brought more artists into the medium and has served as a model for other juried quilt exhibitions.

Since 1979, when the first *Quilt National* was conceived, the art quilt has undergone a remarkable transformation. For a quilt to be considered for inclusion in *Quilt National '93* it had to be original in design and concept. No matter how captivating, a straight rendition of the double wedding ring pattern would not qualify. But traditional patterns and techniques have influenced pieces chosen for the exhibition. "There all kinds of ways to push traditional design so it is new and fresh," said *Quilt National '93* juror Judi Warren.

Each quilt chosen for this exhibition offers an innovative vocabulary of images that results in an individual style, according to the jurors. Originality emerges from that unique vision in combination with a learned and controlled responsiveness to the materials, the jurors said.

In addition to looking for original vision and superb execution, the three jurors looked for quilts with a strong, fresh sense of design. Work in the exhibition exemplifies the ways quilt makers transform color and texture into dynamic patterns that provide new visual experiences.

"The first thing I look for in a quilt is the visual aesthetic," said juror Elizabeth Busch. "I look at the design, composition and focus. Does it have substance? Is it powerful?" Next Busch looks at the craftsmanship, not only to see if it is technically good, but also to consider if it fits with the artist's vision. "Technically good doesn't mean the edges have to match," Busch said.

Several pieces in the exhibition reflect the artist's continuation of variations on traditional geometric patterns. Other makers emphasize the free flowing organic shapes that are possible in quilting. Still others chose the narrative as their vehicle of expression.

"We wanted to reward the vitality of new expression and new risks," said juror Michael Monroe. "A few of the pieces might outrage some people, but that's the way art moves forward. That's what keeps the dialogue lively."

Quilt National '93 was produced by the Dairy Barn Cultural Arts Center in Athens, Ohio. It is being circulated by the Dairy Barn Touring Exhibits Program. The original exhibition included 84 quilts. The presentation in the Riffe Gallery consists of 30 pieces. Jurors for *Quilt National '93* were:

Elizabeth A. Busch of Bangor, Maine, a quilt maker who has worked as an architectural designer and as administrator of Maine's Percent for Art Program, which places art in public buildings.

Michael W. Monroe of Reston, Virginia, curator of the Renwick Gallery of the National Museum of American Art in Washington, D.C., and a lecturer on contemporary American crafts.

Judi Warren of Maumee, Ohio, a quilter and teacher whose work has appeared in national and international publications and is included in corporate collections.

We're Building Ohio Through the Arts

The Ohio Arts Council, a state agency established in 1965, is committed to the economic, educational and cultural development of Ohio. The Council believes the arts should be shared by the people of Ohio. The arts arise from public, individual and organizational efforts. The OAC supports and encourages those efforts.

The Riffe Gallery, operated by the Ohio Arts Council, showcases the work of Ohio's artists and the collection of the state's museums and galleries.

Riffe Gallery

Vern Riffe Center for
Government and the Arts
High & State Streets
Downtown Columbus
614/644-9624

Gallery Hours

M, Tu, W 11-4
Th, F, 11-7:30
Sat, Sun 12-4
Free Admission