

The Quilt Journal

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The QuiltJournal Mission Statement

This is a shortened version of the Mission Statement which appeared in our first issue. For some readers this second issue will be their introduction to the Journal, and we felt a statement of its basic purpose and goals should be included. First-time readers are advised a full Mission Statement is to be found in Volume 1, Number 1, 1992.

—Editors' Note

Background

Scholars from a number of disciplines gathered in Louisville, Kentucky, in February 1992 for "Louisville Celebrates the American Quilt," produced under the auspices of The Kentucky Quilt Project, Inc. The Celebration's exhibitions, seminars and other events were planned to illustrate and further the worldwide growth of interest in quilts and quilting which has developed over the past several decades and provide a wider forum for emerging quilt scholarship. During the two years of planning and review, directors Jonathan Holstein, Eleanor Bingham Miller and Shelly Zegart surveyed the vast outpouring of quilt information in all media. The directors were particularly interested in identifying the most significant trends in quilt scholarship, the future needs of quilt scholars, and the future of quilt scholarship. They reached three conclusions:

Infancy of Quilt Scholarship

First, quilt scholarship in all areas, domestic and international, is in its infancy. We are at the beginning of a new quilt era in which we will witness worldwide development in all areas of quilt interest and activity. As a consequence, an unprecedented opportunity exists for documenting and studying the field as it grows and develops.

Interdisciplinary Involvement

A second conclusion which grew from our study of current quilt scholarship and our experiences at the Celebration was that the *future of quilt study is interdisciplinary*. No other decorative art object carries the quantity or quality of significant social and aesthetic information to be found in quilts. Embodied in the objects are data of the greatest interest to art and

social historians, feminist scholars, students of industry and economics, folklorists, etc. Increasingly quilt scholarship will draw on other disciplines for insights and information. More scholars from other areas will be studying quilts. Methodologies of quilt study will change.

International Focus

The final conclusion was that in all areas of quilt activity, there will be increasing international participation. It is one of the Journal's missions to facilitate the work of those around the world who will be coming to quilt research from other fields, other places and with different visions. The need for a source of quilt information directed toward other fields and other countries as well as to the American quilt establishment, toward the future, is clear.

Mission and Objectives

The Journal will filter from the enormous flow of quilt information produced in the United States and abroad, things of interest to other disciplines and to quilt professionals and amateurs in this and other countries. To accomplish the Journal's mission the editors intend to:

- *Search diligently for and publish interesting and provocative articles and reviews related to the field which might not elsewhere be printed;*
- *Offer a forum to quilt scholars with unusual and interesting ideas;*
- *Draw attention to exhibitions, articles and ideas which the editors feel are significant but might be overlooked;*
- *Discuss controversial ideas which generally are not being aired;*
- *Invite all interested scholars to submit articles and article ideas.*

The Quilt Journal will also examine critically where it is appropriate publications, conferences and exhibitions of interest to the field. We wish to welcome all of you to *The Quilt Journal: An International Review* and look forward to communicating important quilt information to you in coming years.

The Publisher

The Kentucky Quilt Project, Inc., a not-for-profit, 501(c)3, organization, was founded in 1981 by Shelly Zegart, Eleanor Bingham Miller and Eunice Ray to survey the state's quilts. An exhibition "Kentucky Quilts: 1800-1900," which traveled widely in the United States and abroad with the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, and a catalogue of the same title followed the completion of the survey. The Kentucky project was the first such state-wide quilt survey and has served as a model for many others in the United States and elsewhere in the world. Others of its projects include securing for Kentucky a quilt by the American 19th century master quiltmaker Virginia Ivey, assembling an exhibition of Kentucky quilts for Australia, and giving financial assistance to other quilt groups for special projects. In 1991-1992 it sponsored "Louisville Celebrates the American Quilt," planned to illustrate and further the worldwide growth of interest in quilts and quilting which has developed over the past several decades and provide a wider forum for emerging quilt scholarship. Included were six exhibitions: a re-creation of the 1971 Whitney Museum of American Art exhibition, "Abstract Design in American Quilts;" "A Plain Aesthetic: Lancaster Amish Quilts;" "Always There: The African-American Presence in American Quilts;" "Quilts Now;" "Narrations: The Quilts of Yvonne Wells and Carolyn Mazloomi;" "Quilt Conceptions: Quilt Designs in Other Media;" and four conferences: "The African American and the American Quilt;" "Directions in Quilt Scholarship;" "Quilts and Collections: Public, Private and Corporate;" "Toward an International Quilt Bibliography." Two books were published in conjunction with the Celebration: Abstract Design in American Quilts: A Biography of an Exhibition, written by Jonathan Holstein, foreword by Shelly Zegart; and Always There: The African-American Presence in American Quilts, authored by Cuesta Benberry, forewords by Jonathan Holstein and Shelly Zegart. The Quilt Project, an offshoot of The Kentucky Quilt Project, Inc., is a new parent organization for this journal.

The Editors

Jonathan Holstein's interest in quilts began in the 1960s when he and Gail van der Hoof began to collect and study quilts, concentrating on their aesthetic qualities. The exhibition they curated at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, in 1971, "Abstract Design in American Quilts," showed

Memberships and Donations

Membership in The Quilt Project supports the publication of *The Quilt Journal*, the effort to establish and maintain an international quilt index, and other quilt-related educational endeavors. Membership for 1993, will bring you *The Quilt Journal* twice a year. Upon joining, members will be entitled to a one-time discount of 15% on all publications, patrons and sponsors 25%.

Categories of Membership are:

Sponsor	\$250
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Regular	\$15

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quilts for the first time as designed objects and is noted as the starting point for the modern quilt renaissance. Numerous other exhibitions curated by them and drawn from their collection were seen across the United States and abroad and gave wide circulation to their view of quilts as aesthetic objects. These exhibitions were instrumental in creating a worldwide awareness of American quilts. Holstein continues to curate quilt exhibitions. His writing in the field began with the catalogue of the Whitney exhibition. His book The Pieced Quilt: An American Design Tradition, a study of the history and aesthetic basis of American quilts, was published in 1973, and many articles and exhibition catalogues followed. He wrote the introduction and commentaries for The Kentucky Quilt Project's exhibition catalogue, Kentucky Quilts 1800-1900, in 1983 and has been a Director of that group since 1984. In 1991-92, with fellow Directors Shelly Zegart and Eleanor Bingham Miller, he organized and produced "Louisville Celebrates the American Quilt." A new book, Abstract Design in American Quilts: A Biography of an Exhibition, was published in 1992.

Eleanor Bingham Miller was a founder of The Kentucky Quilt Project, Inc., organized in 1981 to survey her state's quilts; and she has been active in all of its projects since then, including the 1991-92 production of "Louisville Celebrates the American Quilt." She is a filmmaker and a partner in Double Play Productions, New York.

Shelly Zegart was a founding director in 1981 of The Kentucky Quilt Project, the first state documentation project. Her initial interest in collecting quilts expanded with the Kentucky state survey to a full-time involvement in the field. Zegart lectures on all aspects of quilt history and aesthetics. She has curated many exhibitions here and abroad, including an exhibition of Kentucky quilts in Australia. In 1992 she curated "Quilts Now," an exhibition of contemporary quilts. Her articles have appeared in numerous publications. In 1992, she wrote forewords for Abstract Design in American Quilts: A Biography of an Exhibition and Always There: The African American Presence in American Quilts. She continues to act as an advisor to other groups conducting state quilt surveys. In 1991-92 with fellow quilt project directors Jonathan Holstein and Eleanor Bingham Miller she organized and produced "Louisville Celebrates the American Quilt."

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