

*The Henry Luce III Center for the Arts and Religion presents*



*Lighting the Darkness* (detail), 2007, textile, 11' x 2 1/2' (photo by PRS Associates)

**Margreta Silverstone:  
Recent Quilts**

May 27 to July 25, 2008

reception for the artist  
Thursday, June 26, 2008  
5:00 to 7:00pm

Dadian Gallery Summer Hours:  
Monday - Friday 11am to 4pm  
Closed holidays

The Dadian Gallery  
Wesley Theological Seminary  
4500 Massachusetts Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20016  
202.885.8674  
[www.luceartsandreligion.org/dadian.htm](http://www.luceartsandreligion.org/dadian.htm)

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT

I want my art to bring the holy to the world. I want my wearable art garments to give dignity to the wearer. I want my work to be a source of healing the spirit.

I first learned to quilt from women at my church in Washington, DC. You need to visit my church to realize how ironic to be doing such a traditional activity in a very non-traditional church. We gathered to make a log cabin quilt-in-a-day, but the power went out mid-day. It took longer than a day to finish that quilt; by the end, I was hooked.

How does one describe influences on your own work? I grew up in Washington state and did a lot of hiking and photography. Does my sense of color come from those formative years? Does my love for the simple come from the year I spent in Japan where I taught English as a missionary and practiced shuji? Does my current sense of patterning come from more than 8 years of working in the computer industry? How does one take the experiences of a lifetime and pick the parts that are "important"? Where and how does my faith influence my work? I don't journal enough to answer all these questions. I'd rather spend my time DOING my artistic work.

It took me ten years to apprentice in this art craft before I was willing to hear the criticisms of others through juried shows. My apprenticeship was not as long as Itchiku Kubota's (master kimono maker in the tsujigahana style), but I understand the same need to perfect one's skill and knowledge. I still have many things to learn.

*Margreta Silverstone*

## NOTES ON THE WORKS

### **Wild Jane #1, 2006**

I co-curated an exhibit that used fabric from Jane Sassaman. Unfortunately, my life was a bit too busy with a new son to actually make anything for the exhibit myself. Later, when I had a bit more time, I made these.

### **Wild Jane #2, 2006**

Sometimes I only allow myself a small segment of time to create a piece. It focuses my design attention. These pieces worked well for that discipline.

### **Floral Fantasy #1, 2006**

I live in a home that was built in 1923. I wanted to explore floral patterns that were appropriate to that time. I remember having flowers like these in the garden at my childhood home.

### **Floral Fantasy #2, 2006**

I live in a home that was built in 1923. I wanted to explore floral patterns that were appropriate to that time. I remember having flowers like these in the garden at my childhood home. I remember tending the fuchsia after the flower fell.

### **Cool Ways #1, 2006**

I like using the scraps from a larger project to make these pieces. I enjoy the play. Fusing some of the elements of the design makes the work go faster. I made many of these little “Cool Ways” and gave a number of them to friends.

### **Cool Ways #2, 2006**

Good design is as important in a small piece as it is in a large one. I keep learning about design by making and trying.

### **Jewelbox Inchies, 2008**

With other members of the art quilt group Cloth & Chocolate, I exchanged the small one and a half inch squares. We made our own individual quilts using the results of the exchange. I found I wanted to “feature” many of these pieces and this was one way to accomplish that goal.

### **Essence of Fan, 2006**

*Essence of Fan* was a group challenge based on a photograph I took when I lived in Tokyo. The photo was divided into nine vertical pieces, each one enlarged to 6" by 36" for the project. After much procrastination and a great deal of angst, a deadline was set. Each group member interpreted her slice, proving that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Participants (left to right): Patty Hayes, Margreta Silverstone, Pay Lefevre, Linda August, SherriJoyce King, Mary Moore Payne, JoAnna Kruse, Leslie Sorenson, Margaret Natof.

*Note cards are available from the artist.*

### **Redbud, 2007**

I like the 1 to 6 dimension and am compelled to explore it some more. The redbud leaves were leftovers from another project. I wanted to try multiple strips of piecing over and over again to see about getting a better texture for a tree.

### **Environment #1, 2006**

In Cloth & Chocolate, an art quilt group of which I am a member, we have challenged ourselves to make a small square piece and try something new. I find myself wanting to play with layers. Dutch Fusion had some layers, but not enough. I started by working in the background greens, just cutting and piecing and cutting and piecing. I didn't realize that I had enough for more than one piece.

### **Environment #2, 2006**

I created this piece in the early spring, the rainy season here in DC. Somehow the piece has taken on a concern about acid rain and the impact that has on our world.

### **Environment #3, 2006**

I like the first in the series but find #2 strayed too far afield for my comfort zone. I spend time trying to paint and stamp and fuse and paint again leaves from the trees in my neighborhood.

### **Environment #4, 2006**

I am not sure that I have stayed with my original intention of playing with layers, but I find this piece works for me. The use of covered wire to give the layer dimension and freedom works. The background was a happy coincidence. It may be that I am really done with layers for now.

### **Maple, 2007**

This is the third in the 1 to 6 dimension. The maple leaves were from another project. The bark is fused to the background fabric. I played with a different product to get the rougher edge of bark feel to the pieces.

### **Lighting the Darkness, 2007**

This piece was a commission. It is meant for display during Chanukah and Advent, but can be used during other seasons as the menorah and advent wreath can be removed. Fibers used include commercial cotton fabrics, hand dyed cotton fabrics, cotton woven Guatemalan fabrics, organza, hand painted organza, tulle. Parts of the work have been hand painted with oil sticks or Jacquard Lumiere paints. Couched decorative threads used on some pieces. Hand beading applied with glass and plastic beads. I was asked to make "points of light" and this became the result.

*From the collection of Pastoral Ministries, Riderwood Retirement Community, Silver Spring, MD.*

### **Fall Flight, 2008**

Some years ago, I purchased a curved ruler. I finally found the time to use it. I enjoyed being able to use it as another means to do a kaleidoscope design. I also liked being able to use some Asian inspired fabrics. I'm not sure I like the ruler, but I do like the results.

### **Paula, You Don't Have to Worry, 1999**

Paula Nadelstern has made a name for herself in artistic kaleidoscope quilts. After reading her technique book, this was my first attempt at the style. While I liked the result, I wasn't enamored with the effort! But, little did I realize I would revisit the style. Guess I shouldn't have been so bold in the title for the piece.

*From the collection of Anna Gilcher.*

### **Dutch Gold, 2005**

A few years ago, I joined Uhuru quilters. These wonderful African American women have taught and inspired me. One of our challenges was a mystery quilt. The instructions for creating the quilt are given out piece by piece so that the overall design remains somewhat of a mystery. Because these women are so used to "breaking the rules," I didn't use the fabrics recommended. Instead I used an Indonesian dark blue batik, reproduction Dutch fabrics, and a hand painted gold fabric purchased from an artist in Oregon. I also ventured out with my machine quilting to let the design be seen.

### **Asian Fall Series, 2008**

I enjoy doing these small studies, sometimes before and sometimes after working on a related piece. The work that I did on Fall Flight produced a lot of extra fabric scraps. I played with these pieces.

### **Reflections Series, 2007- 2008**

As part of a drawing with your eyes closed experience, I found these shapes that I wanted to explore. I have found continued inspiration in trying these shapes and other choices.

### **Dutch Theme, 2001**

My parents are immigrants from The Netherlands. I grew up being able to speak both English and Dutch. My memories of summer are of lengthy visits with family. I still value this multi-cultural exposure. This piece was the result of exchanging blocks with other quilters all over the world who also claim a connection to the Dutch.

### **Passing It On: I Remember Mama, 2004**

This quilt presents four generations of our family, four generations of values and beliefs passed down: Dutch heritage (brought to the United States in 1960) and Calvinistic faith. It represents two generations of quilters: Case and Ada Voskuilen and daughter, Margreta Voskuilen Silverstone, designed and created this quilt together. The team jointly planned the block concepts, the initial layout and the assembly of the top. Each member created individual blocks within a defined color scheme. This quilt was displayed at Houston International Quilt Festival in November 2004 as part of the "I Remember Mama" exhibit. Quilt is included in the book by the same name, published October 2005. Machine pieced, hand appliquéd, machine appliquéd, hand embroidered, machine quilted.

### **Taste & See: Jacobean Dream, 2007**

I have worked on this piece off and on for many years. The pieced background came first. And, on its own it told me it wasn't done. Then, I added the black border. Still, it said it wasn't done. Finally, with the addition of the Jacobean floral (and grapes) it said what I wanted. I wanted to fill the "empty" space with quilting, but not just any design. Another Jacobean floral design worked well to fill the space.

## .LIST OF WORKS

1. <i>Wild Jane #1, 2006, 6" x 8"</i>	\$42
2. <i>Wild Jane #2, 2006, 6" x 8"</i>	\$42
3. <i>Floral Fantasy #1, 2006, 6" x 8"</i>	\$42
4. <i>Floral Fantasy #2, 2006, 6" x 8"</i>	\$42
5. <i>Cool ways postcard #1, 2006, 6" x 8"</i>	\$42
6. <i>Cool ways postcard #2, 2006, 6" x 8"</i>	\$42
7. <i>Jewelbox Inchies, 2008, 30" x 34"</i>	\$708
8. <i>Essence of Fan, 2006, 36" x 54"</i>	NFS
collection of the artist	
9. <i>Redbud, 2007, 24" x 4"</i>	\$67
10. <i>Environment #1, 2006, 12" x 12"</i>	\$100
11. <i>Environment #2, 2006, 12" x 12"</i>	\$100
12. <i>Environment #3, 2006, 12" x 12"</i>	\$100
13. <i>Environment #4, 2006, 12" x 12"</i>	\$100
14. <i>Maple, 2007, 24" x 4"</i>	\$67
15. <i>Lighting the Darkness, 2007, 132" x 30"</i>	NFS
collection of Riderwood Retirement Community, Pastoral Ministries, Silver Spring, MD	
16. <i>Fall Flight, 2008, 34" x 43"</i>	\$1,015
17. <i>Paula, You Don't Need to Worry, 1999, 24.5" x 36"</i>	NFS
collection of Anna Gilcher	
18. <i>Dutch Gold, 2005 39" x 39"</i>	\$845
19. <i>Asian Fall #1, 2008, 9" x 9"</i>	\$65
20. <i>Asian Fall #2, 2008, 9" x 9"</i>	\$65
21. <i>Asian Fall #3, 2008, 9" x 9"</i>	\$65
22. <i>Asian Fall #4, 2008, 9" x 9"</i>	\$65
23. <i>Reflections: After the Storm, 12" x 15"</i>	\$125
24. <i>Reflections: Awakening, 2007-8, 11.5" x 11"</i>	\$88
25. <i>Reflections: Quiet, 2007-8, 12" x 12.5"</i>	\$104
26. <i>Reflections: Aging, 2007-8, 11.5" x 11"</i>	\$88
27. <i>Reflections: Night, 2007-8, 10" x 10.5"</i>	\$73
28. <i>Reflections: Growth, 2007-8, 13" x 12"</i>	\$108
 <b>IN THE BOARD ROOM</b>	
29. <i>Dutch Theme, 2001, 60" x 60"</i>	NFS
collection of the artist	
30. <i>Passing it On: I Remember Mama, 71" x 73"</i>	NFS
collection of Case & Ada Voskuilen	
 <b>IN THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE</b>	
31. <i>Taste &amp; See: Jacobean Dream, 34" x 35"</i>	\$826

## CURATOR'S STATEMENT

It is not often that one gets the opportunity to watch someone grow into a full-fledged artist before one's very eyes. When I first met Margreta Silverstone, she was a young graduate student in serious pursuit of a career in public service. Today, she is indeed a public servant, as well as a wife, mother, and faithful member of a Christian community. As may be seen in the quilts on display, she is also an accomplished artist who has grown in her chosen medium through disciplined practice, attention to detail, and an eagerness to continually stretch herself in new directions.

The works in this exhibition demonstrate Margreta's continual willingness to challenge herself, enriching both her visual sense and her technical expertise. While some of the works may be understood as practical exercises, their complexity, unexpected color choices, and use of non-traditional materials suggest a depth of meaning that the artist, herself, only hints at in her explanations.

It is with great pleasure that I introduce Margreta Silverstone and her quilts to the Wesley Theological Seminary Community. May these rich, vibrant patches of cloth and color bring as much pleasure to all who view them as they do to me.

*Deborah Sokolove  
Curator, Dadian Gallery*

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*The Henry Luce III Center for the Arts and Religion is a program of Wesley Theological Seminary. The Center sponsors a variety of cultural events which explore the intersection of art and faith.*

*All contributions are tax-deductible and gratefully accepted*