



FIRST PLACE
Kelly Thompson; London, England
"Peninsula Strips"

Opening Reflections

by Arden Solomon

As soon as I arrived at the PCA on Friday night, I knew that the opening was a success. It was only 5:35 and already it was difficult to find a parking place. The artists' bus arrived. Other visitors arrived. The galleries became more crowded as the evening continued. People attending the openings on the second floor were also attracted to Fiberart International. Some even took advantage of the shuttle to explore the work at the SCC, where a sizeable crowd had gathered as well.

Although it's difficult to really look at the artwork during a crowded opening, there were some pieces I was drawn to immediately. Pam Cooper's "Paper Doll" at the PCA reminded me of the time I spent designing outfits for my paper dolls as a child. I had so much fun creating clothing for those dolls that for many years I wanted to be a fashion designer.

Also at the PCA, Angela Silver's "Residuum" with its wooden spools of thread made me think of those spools my grandfather, a tailor, used. His sewing machine, a treadle-operated Singer, fascinated me. The bobbin maker on that machine resembled a tiny sewing machine. I pretended to sew on the little bobbin maker, probably making clothes for my other dolls.

"Bridezilla", by Noel Palomo-Lovinski, was the piece that stood out at the SCC. The printed text, which repeats to form a pattern on the dress, contains negative comments by brides who truly seem about to go over the edge. Those comments made me think of some wedding 'horror stories' which I had witnessed, like the wedding party whose dresses all resembled lamp shades, complete with balls of fringe around the hems, and the unfortunate maid of honor who fainted during an extremely long ceremony.

A further walk around the SCC revealed a hidden treasure, Archie Brennan's "Seated Male Nude." The quality of the line in this woven piece has a simple elegance that is truly beautiful.

I expect to make more trips through both galleries before this colorful show comes down in August.



THANK YOU, JAN & PATTY

It's the Guild's turn to thank you for the countless hours, endless patience, and creative thinking that have taken Fiberart International 2007 to even higher levels.

In this issue, there are articles from artists and participants that document the complete success of your labors. Under your guidance, the Fiberarts Guild members and volunteers have created a memorable event.

So again we say: Thanks!



L to R: Larry Kubala, Sr. VP of Consumer Lending, First Commonwealth Bank; Barb Kubala, Fiberarts Guild of Pittsburgh; Peggy Greene, and Carson Greene, Sr. VP of Government and Community Relations, First Commonwealth Bank.



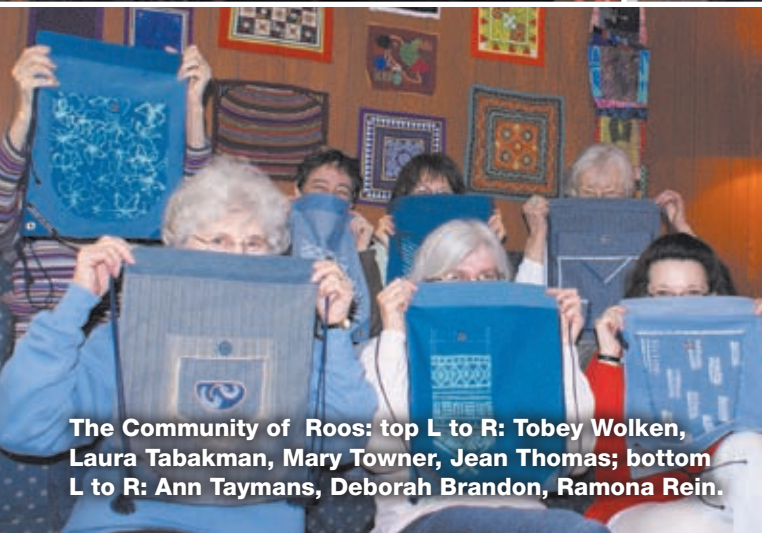
Emiko Nakano, Past Director Award recipient and Fiberart International Director, Patricia Murphy.



Director, Janet Bass announcing award recipients at the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts.



Jason Pollen, Professor and Chair, Fiber Dept., Kansas City Art Institute and President, SDA



The Community of Roos: top L to R: Tobey Wolken, Laura Tabakman, Mary Towner, Jean Thomas; bottom L to R: Ann Taymans, Deborah Brandon, Ramona Rein.



Volunteers and Guild members, L to R: Patsy McKenna, Arden Solomon, Michelle Browne, Carolyn Carson, Deb Meteney and Anna Divinsky.

COMMUNITY

by Ramona Rein

Community is defined as “a group of persons, bound by ties of common interest” in the dictionary. A group of people came together as the “Community of Roos.” This dynamic community is a living organism within the larger community of Fiberart International 07.

Fundraiser ideas came, were groomed and pursued until the Roo Bag was born. Mary Towner took the lead so graciously and worked with the group to find correct dimensions, materials and ultimately directions on sewing the bags. Even with my illness, I felt part of the community. Mary would call and we would bounce ideas off one another and I was able to contribute to the group.

This Roo community has a wonderful core. As we worked together to design the pockets, we shared laughter, stories, and of course, good food. But, like a pebble thrown in the water, our needs rippled out. People responded by sewing; our community grew and we couldn't have done it without you generous sewers!

We had grommet-and-cording days to finish the bags and the “Roo community” had completed its goal of 151 bags!

Every time we choose to or are able to say “yes” to some aspect of volunteering for the Guild, we have an opportunity to reach out, meet someone new, get to know someone better.

This has been a wondrous journey for me in many ways. I sojourned from illness to health. I shared more of myself with the people around me by allowing myself to enter this community. I had the amazing opportunity to get to know wonderful people.

Many pebbles were thrown in the water of the fiberarts community to make this International and all of the satellite shows happen. I think we all have something special to tuck away in our hearts from this International; we have community.

Added note: A special wish goes to one of our Community of Roos. Deborah Brandon was taken very ill at the end of our project, and her energy and special contributions have been sorely missed. The whole committee wishes you a full and robust recovery, Deb.

Roo Bags Hop

The official fundraiser project for FI 07, the famous Roo Bag went on sale and made a fashion statement at the opening weekend festivities. Dubbed “Roo Bag” because of its distinctive pocket, it's a denim drawstring tote bag that can be worn as a backpack. No two bags are alike. A committee of seven hard-working Guild members designed the bags, then cut, bleach-resist dyed, painted, embroidered, appliquéd, fringed, and otherwise embellished all the pockets. An army of volunteers then sewed the 151 bags and applied the pockets and a woven Fiberart International 07 label. If you missed your chance to purchase a bag and support the International, you can still get them at the gift shops of the PCA and SCC.

This Makes It All Worthwhile:

To all of the Fiberart International 2007 Committees, SCC, and PCA,

What you all do/have done to promote the field of textiles is incredible! The Fiberart International exhibitions are tremendously important in solidifying contemporary fiber in its historical significance. I don't think it is possible to thank all of you sufficiently for what you have accomplished with this current event/exhibition and all your past years of hosting Fiberart International exhibitions. The show is beautifully hung. The catalogue is fantastic. You all created a very special moment in time this past weekend.

I have known for years that this is a significant exhibition, and it was exciting for me to have my work accepted in the 2007 show. But I didn't expect all the other 'stuff'. You attended to so many details to make this a remarkable experience for all of us artists. I have never experienced anything quite like it. On a day-to-day level we studio artists spend a lot of solitary time and to be in the environment you created and have all the wonderful conversations, see so much quality fiber, feel the support and encouragement is incredibly energizing, and all the while you chauffeured us and fed us great food.

Thank you all for your tremendous hospitality! It was a wonderful experience; I am so glad I went. Everything was very well organized. You all were very gracious and made us all feel so special. This event requires such an enormous amount of work, organization, communication, and time long before and after it happens, please know that it is well worth it and greatly appreciated. Keep doing what you are doing. It is an honor to be included.

I hope you all are able to get well rested and rejuvenated.

Most sincerely, thank you,

Joan Webster-Vore

They & You Made It Happen

by Jean Thomas

A very brief history of Fiberart International and how it grew and grew and grew...

Fiberart International has its roots in biennial Stitchery exhibitions during the sixties and seventies. Then came Embroidery Internationals, the last of which was in 1987 with Ann Taymans as director. Naturally when the Guild changed its name from Embroiderers to Fiberarts the international exhibition followed suit and became Fiberart International. Mary Ann Klussmann agreed to direct the 1989, but to her consternation the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts moved up its year-long closing for remodeling. The ever-resourceful Mary Ann arranged for the exhibition to hang at the Galleria in Mount Lebanon. Expecting about 300 entries, she and her committee were overwhelmed with over 1000.

The growth continued in subsequent exhibitions directed by Yvonne Moossey ('91); Patricia Kennedy-Zafred and Leonoor Mastboom Zehner ('93); Patricia Kennedy-Zafred and Jan Myers-Newbury ('95'); Patricia Kennedy-Zafred and Rise Nagin ('97); Sally Yunis and Millie Barnes ('99); Rise Nagin ('01); Michelle Browne, Laura Tabakman, and Jean Thomas ('04) and current directors team of Jan Bass and Patty Murphy.

As the exhibition expanded in scope, activities and budget, directors encountered multiple challenges as they each took Fiberart International to new levels. Early shows were up just three weeks and only at PCA. Patty got four weeks in '95 and negotiated six weeks and the addition of the Society for Contemporary Craft as a second venue for '97. Sally and Millie expanded membership participation and added both the Forum and satellite exhibitions for Guild members' work. Rise increased funding through grants, added collaboration with public schools, emphasized emerging artists, and expanded the catalog.

Together Sally and Rise produced the Management Workbook to guide future directors. The Michelle/Laura/Jean team expanded Focus on Fiber, arranged a longer exhibition schedule, produced shibori bags as a fund raising tool, and successfully negotiated traveling the show for the first time.

This brief account highlights the contribution of previous directors, but the real key to the ongoing success and growth of Fiberart International is the support and participation of Guild members, who contribute their knowledge, skills, and countless hours of time. Congratulations to all of you.



Guild member Laura Tabakman at the unpacking of the work.



Fiberarts Guild President, Michelle Browne and juror and Forum keynote speaker Dorothy Caldwell.



Director Jan Bass (right) talks with artists and guests at SCC.



FI07 artist Angela Silver (right) discusses her work with Fiberart Forum participants.



JURORS' STATEMENTS

Dorothy Caldwell's work is in galleries worldwide as well as in public, private, corporate, and museum collections and in articles, books, film, and video. Ms. Caldwell, who has curated many exhibitions, is in demand internationally as a teacher and lecturer.

I was delighted to discover work that was subtle, elegant and restrained as well as work full of humor, tongue-in-cheek wit, and off-beat ideas.

Naomi Kobayashi received the Gold Medal at the 1981 International Textile Triennial in Lodz, Poland and has exhibited five years at the Biennale International de la Tapisserie, Lausanne, Switzerland.

The works that were selected were forceful and possessed a high degree of completeness that conveys a mastery of techniques.

Lois Moran, recently retired Editor-in-Chief of *American Craft* magazine, is currently VP for North America on the World Crafts Council Executive Committee. She received the 1993 Lifetime Achievement Award, Women in the Craft Arts, National Museum of Women in the Arts.

A quality of intimacy is definitely present in this exhibition—through scale, delicacy, narrative. Color, so important an ingredient of fiber art, has been used in rich and pleasing combinations, but there are also works of no color—stormy, serene or brooding neutrals.



Opening night at the Society for Contemporary Craft.



L to R: Charlie Humphrey, Executive Director, PCA/Pittsburgh Filmmakers; Bernard Freyberg; Laura Domencic, PCA Director.



FI07 artist Joan Webster-Vore examines artwork of Alexandru Usineviu.



FI07 artist Jan Myers-Newbury (right) with Fiberart Forum participants.



FI07 Artist Melissa Vogley-Woods (left) and Christina Pereyma (right) with Forum participant.



L to R: FI07 artists Kelly Thompson and Camilla Brent Pearce and Guild member Mary Towner



FI07 artist Mami Idei with Fiberart Forum participants.



FI07 artist Adrienne Yorinks (right) discusses her work at the Society for Contemporary Craft.

From the Directors

EDITORS' NOTE: For this special FI issue, we asked co-directors Jan Bass and Patty Murphy two questions: 1) Why did you take the job? and, 2) How do you feel now that the show's in place? Below are Jan's answers. Look for Patty's in the next newsletter.

When Lou Kambic—that wonderful, energetic, giving person—asked for a meeting to discuss a 'great' idea, I knew what was coming so was prepared with an answer. I agreed to take the International directorship partly because challenges are always tempting but also because I need to contribute to the organization that has become such an empowering and rich part of my artistic life.

How do I feel about that decision now? Well, experiencing an incredible weekend talking with fantastic artists, being astounded by our volunteers who go beyond what is asked and still smile, viewing the exhibition in two beautiful venues, hearing again and again how wonderful the show is, and finally, experiencing a standing ovation from the artists, what can I say but "euphoric"! The experience has afforded me opportunities not available otherwise—to meet world class artists, to learn new skills, to deepen Guild friendships and make new ones, to work with wonderful foundation personnel and experience other little events too numerous to list. Is it worth all the work? You bet. Would I do it again? Not today. Sleep, I need . . . zzzzz.

Both Sides of the Fence

by Jan Myers-Newbury

EDITOR'S NOTE: Jan Myers-Newbury has worn many hats for Fiberart International. In addition to being an exhibiting artist, in the past she has held the positions of Director, Juror, Registrar, Slide Manager, Hospitality Chair, plus countless other tasks. Her role in the International's success has been invaluable, and the Guild owes her a debt of gratitude.

Grateful high points go to Dorothy Caldwell for giving us a most eloquent and universal presentation of that most humble of things: the stitch. And in her opening remarks, Dorothy commented on the vagueries of the jury system and wished that every artist would have the opportunity to sit on a jury panel. I have sat on both sides of that fence, and know her words to be absolutely true.

This past weekend I had the privilege to sit on the other side of a slightly different fence—the one that celebrated the artists of Fiberart International 07. And what a celebratory event you made of it! The Guild did everything possible to make the artists feel welcomed, esteemed and undaunted by the vicissitudes of Pittsburgh. I felt such pride at being a member of the Guild: it was a greater source of pride for me than being an exhibiting artist (and don't get me wrong—I was VERY proud of that). I have often had some responsibility for the opening of the International. This year, all I did was show up wearing my name tag. What a cool thing that there are always competent women to carry on with those things that you once took on yourself!

What a treat to have Clare Verstegen there after being juried into so many Internationals. I didn't realize before inspecting her work closely that Clare's imagery was printed on industrial felt. Admittedly my contact with her slides was at best businesslike. I told her that I was pleasantly surprised by this added texture and depth. She responded that it had been experimental work and that getting into the International was an affirmation that she needed to continue with that direction. Wow! I think it's pretty easy, when we see consistently excellent work from an artist, to forget that our efforts might play a part in that development.

And then there was Feliksas Jakubauskas! What a trip to see him there. Patty Kennedy and I chaired FI 95, and that year his work won Best of Show. Patty was the brave person: she called Lithuania to tell him. She told me how their formal introductions dissolved into giddy excitement when she explained why she was calling. When I introduced myself on Friday night I recalled that phone conversation, and he certainly remembered. It took a huge amount of effort for him to arrange a trip to the U.S.—money, visa, etc.—and he was thrilled to be here.

It bears repeating: the Guild does a HUGE service for the community of fiber artists. Each International presents the work of INDIVIDUALS. Some are seasoned veterans, and others are newly embarked on the exhibition journey. Each of them considers it a feather in their cap to be included in the show. They cannot believe that we are a volunteer organization. We are amazing!

A final, personal note: I cannot express how nurtured and supported I felt this weekend. Your concern for me over the last seven months has shown itself in so many ways. I have been deeply touched. Thank you.

Celebration Party

by Mary Towner

Saturday night brought the gala finale of Fiberart International 07 opening activities. FI volunteers, exhibiting artists, spouses and guests gathered to party, unwind, and congratulate each other for a job well done. Due to the large number of volunteers and visiting FI 07 artists, we outgrew our previous venue atop Mt. Washington. Although that location seemed hard to top, the 31st floor of the Regional Enterprise Tower downtown succeeded. Floor-to-ceiling glass walls afforded dramatic views of our city and surrounding area, presenting a dramatic show for our out-of-town visitors.

At a point when all Guild volunteers must have wanted only to crash-and-party, our unflagging Party Committee just kept on ticking to provide us with edibles, potables, and a generally great time. Guild President Michelle Brown emceed hearty thanks and congratulations all around. But in my opinion, the most moving tribute came in the form of an impromptu standing ovation for the Guild from the exhibiting artists. It doesn't get any more rewarding than that.

(PHOTO ABOVE) Origami mice, one of many table decorations created by Guild member Sue Neff and friends. (BELOW) At the reception.



Forum Keynote Address

by Jean Thomas

Dorothy Caldwell, one of the three jurors for Fiberart International 07, prefaced her keynote presentation to Forum participants by declaring what an honor it was to serve as a juror. She emphasized how difficult it had been to pare down the submissions. "A lot of fabulous work was not exhibited," she said. "Every artist should serve on a jury. Then the next rejection wouldn't be so painful!"

Her talk, "Out of the Ordinary/Textiles from the Everyday," was illustrated with slides of various forms of domestic stitchery—patching, darning, mending, embellishing—employed by women from many cultures throughout history. (She commented that during her four years of art history courses, stitching was never mentioned.) Her own exploration of stitching includes the following observations.

- The stitch is a way for women to express themselves creatively. The needle become like a pencil in the hands of an artist, making marks.
- The stitch is a gesture, with the direction of the mark giving energy and rhythm to the surface.
- The repetitive nature of stitching is meditative. By adding one mark to the next I am giving myself time.

Caldwell showed a number of slides illustrating traditional stitching from various cultures, including Indian, Japanese, Australian and American. "You can make a whole world out of ordinary fabrics," she concluded.

Front Page Coverage!

If you missed the great preview for Fiberart International 2007 in the April 12 magazine section of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, look it up on the PG web page. It includes a front cover illustration from the exhibition and a comprehensive article with additional images by Mary Thomas, who herself spent several hours previewing the exhibition.

www.post-gazette.com/pg/07102/777120-42.stm

A note about the catalog:

The catalogs were printed with soy-based inks on 'green' paper: The manufacturer is certified to the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI).

To purchase a catalog contact Mary Jordan at:
MaryMcDJ@aol.com / 412-242-5121

Or visit our website: fiberartinternational.org

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 Mary Towner, Martha Wasik

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Fiberart Forum

by Desha Jaramaz

When I was little I used to visit my grandmother who lived in a house with a beautiful garden. Each summer it would be filled with flowers, in pots and beds bursting with bloom. I thought it just happened. The same was true with Fiberart International.

My first encounter was three Internationals ago when I just came to the Forum, found everything exciting and enchanting and felt like a kid in a candy store. Then for the last International, there were sign-up sheets for volunteer tasks passed around at a Guild meeting. Lou Kambic said to me, "You should sign up for this. It's fun." And I did. And it was fun. This time I remembered Lou and signed up for many tasks and got to be involved in most phases of the enormous process that makes Fiberart International happen. And I had fun again and realized that there is a whole army of "elves" that work long and hard on numerous tasks that bring this event to life. It doesn't just happen.

And all of that leads to the Forum with all its sounds:

- the buzz of all the people that filled the Garden Center with a cloud of positive energy on which I will float like a kite every time I open the catalog
- the quiet and calm of Dorothy Caldwell's presentation. Her talk and slides struck a particular chord with me. My mother still darns socks in a way that is almost invisible. An old neighbor darned nylon stockings for a living. So it was nice to realize that one shouldn't feel crazy for wanting to master that craft.
- and again the crescendo of sounds that filled the galleries. Entering these great exhibit spaces, you find many artists surrounded with flocks of curious people. And it doesn't matter that you join in the middle of a sentence, you still get to know about someone's creative process, someone else's unique technique. One young artist has already spent 10 years in Japan growing and making indigo; one artist got her inspiration from having work done on the foundation of her house; yet another talked about multiple layerings and her "more is more" philosophy yet her piece actually looked very simplistic; some artists looked so much like their work.

In short, a great excitement and euphoria envelops you at the Forum, and what can be better than that? We will try to savor these feelings for a little longer, and then soon it will be time to think about the next International. I hope to see you there.

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First Commonwealth Bank
 Friends of Fiber Art International
 The Grable Foundation
 The Heinz Endowments
 The MAK Fund of The Pittsburgh Foundation
 The Mellon Financial Corporation Fund
 The Pennsylvania Council on the Arts
 The Pittsburgh Foundation



**Brew House
through May 5**

FIBERARTS GUILD OF PITTSBURGH membership shows present a wide variety of fiber technique.



**Northland
Public Library
through June 29**

Focus on Fiber: Satellite events in conjunction with Fiberart International 2007

- **Vessel:** Juried Guild member show 4/7-5/5. Brew House, South Side 412-381-7767
- **Ethnic Display:** Ethnic textiles 4/10-6/15. Bulgarian Macedonian National Education & Cultural Center, West Homestead 412-461-6188 bmnecc.org
- **Boomerang:** Guild members' artwork from *Up Over Down Under* 4/13-5/4. Planet Art Gallery, Mt. Lebanon 412-343-3808 planetartgallery.com
- **Quilt Art Celebration:** Juried Guild membership show 4/14-6/29. Northland Public Library, Pittsburgh 412-366-8100 einetwork.net/ein/northland
- **Hanging by a Thread:** Work by local fiber artists 4/20-5/18. le Poire Gallery, Crafton 412-921-0912 le-poire.com
- **All City Art Show:** Elementary & middle schools 5/1-5/31; fiber art from Tina Brewer's residency 5/19 only. Children's Museum, Pittsburgh 412-322-5058 pittsburghkids.org
- **Fiber and Fun to Function:** Papermaking workshop 5/8. Manchester Academic Charter School, Pittsburgh 412-322-0585
- **Janice Lessman-Moss:** Recent woven work 5/11-6/1. Exit Gallery, Cleveland OH 330-321-8161 exitgallery.com
- **Papilla:** Anna Divinsky fiber installation 5/25-6/22. Chatham College, Pittsburgh 412-365-1106 chatham.edu
- **Lake Erie Fiberart Group:** Member show 5/26-6/24. Campbell's Studio, Cambridge Springs 814-734-8800 campbellpotterystore.com
- **Quilt National:** Juried art quilts 5/26-9/2. Dairy Barn, Athens OH 740-592-4981 quiltnational.com
- **Fiber:** Contemporary fiber art at Fe Gallery POSTPONED.

June-October Focus events in next newsletter.

A Peripatetic Fashion Tour

by Sally Yunis

Being noticeably uncommitted to fashion, it surprised me when garments in the International kept luring my eyes. After a little while I understood the enticement—these show clothes are made of metaphors. So I relented and tried them on.

Donna Rhae Marder's tattered "Oilcloth Dress for Joanie" may be a tuckered-out memoir. Yet... the pinafore's winged sleeves seem ready for flight and remind me how much happy memories lift my spirits.

Pam Cooper's "Paper Doll" stages questions for me to play with. Do we toy with clothes or do they toy with us? Which garments make throw-away statements and which ones belong in a scrapbook?

The Escher-like effect of "Inside the Wallpaper" by Anne T. Kmieck puts me inside a cyclic memo. Hot fashions stand out in a crowd, but yesterday's hot disappears when the crowd catches up.

Unexpectedly, the petals Christina Pereyima encased in a waxed "Autumn Dress" carry me off to Gene Stratton-Porter's swampy woods of the Limberlost. Sometimes I clothe myself in imaginary worlds.

"Couture Series: Lucy" by Elizabeth Mesa-Gaido makes me wonder if a bad hair day hides under that plumpy critter's hat. Or, does the hat become a magic windshield when Lucy swoops about on her little flying feet?

Could even I dance all night if I wore "Dance Pod 2" by Elisabeth Hamlyn? No... but from the sidelines I could entertain myself nicely, dreaming up wishes those blue pockets might or might not hold.

Noel Palomo-Lovinsky gave a scary title—"Bridezilla"—to a pretty, pink, pearly wedding dress. Closer, I see the gown announces issues too scary to mention. How often does clothing pose queries only mirrors hear?

John Morabito's "Shroud #205", at first eschewed, on intrepid inspection reveals a quiet promise waiting on the wall. Wrap-up warmth and gentle textures, felt rather than easily seen, are offered here.

Revealing diverse attitudes about clothing, Fiberart International artists created apparel that probes multi-layered contexts. I believe visitors will enjoy searching these garments to find metaphors of their own.

BE A DOCENT!

On docenting from FI Director Jan Bass:

Docents play a fun, rewarding and key role in the International. They interface with our audiences and help bring the art to life for them. It is delightful to see a viewer's face light up with appreciation and new interest when a docent provides an interesting piece of information about the art or artist. We provide training, information from the artist, and help. You provide a friendly, helpful presence and a couple hours on selected Saturdays.

Contact Sally Yunis at 412-363-0204 or e-mail sallyyunis@verizon.net.

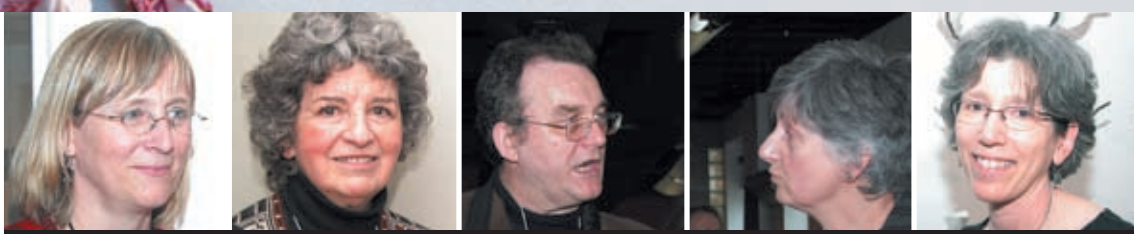
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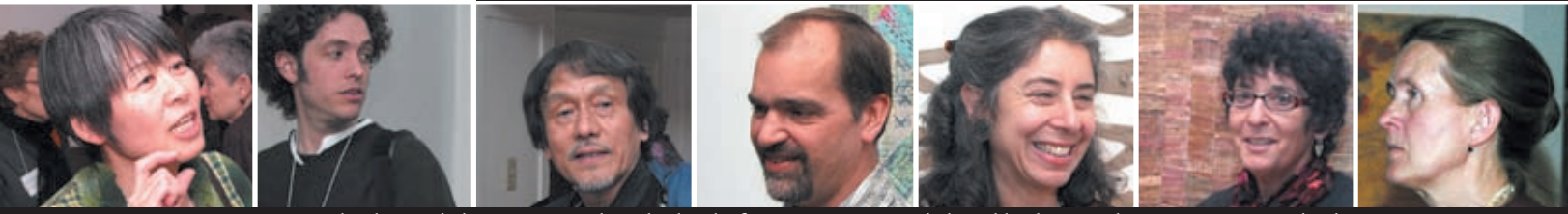
FIBERART INTERNATIONAL 2007

Noel Palomo-Lovinski "Bridezilla" 2005

Fiberart International



Comments from exhibiting artists:



You completely spoiled us. • Amazed at the level of organization. Unbelievable that a volunteer group can do this.



You guys are an impossible act to follow. • You have a unique community that I never witnessed before.



A few of the artists who attended the opening reception and participated in the Fiberart Forum, A Dialogue With Artists.