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CHALLENGE YOUR ASSUMPTIONS THIS SUMMER AT THE SAN JOSE MUSEUM OF QUILTS & TEXTILES

SAN JOSE, Calif., April 8, 2008 – Two new exhibitions opening June 17, 2008 at the Museum of Quilts & Textiles challenge our assumptions about sculpture, knitting, appliqué and embroidery with pieces ranging from provocative to whimsical. *Beyond Knitting: Uncharted Stitches* is an exhibition of contemporary sculptural knitting showcasing the emergence of sculptural art knitting as a 21st century medium of imaginative and cutting edge artistic innovation. *Pun Intended: The Appliquéd Wit of Dorothy Vance*, features 14 of her humorous quilts juxtaposing folk art, politics and pop culture. Both exhibitions run through August 24, 2008. An opening reception is scheduled for June 22 from 2-4:00pm.

For *Beyond Knitting*, Museum curator Deborah Corsini and guest co-curator and artist Adrienne Sloane have selected a visually stunning, powerful, and intellectually provocative exhibition that highlights the tremendous variety of approaches and subject matter that contemporary textile artists here and abroad are tackling using knitting as the primary technique.

“Knitting shapes have long been defined by the human form,” said Sloane. “Knitting has moved from clothing geometry to sculpture, joining other textile art media in taking advantage of the form’s rich and powerful historical references. The knit art in this exhibit links us emotionally to the past while presenting an important visual commentary on the present.”

Added Corsini, “*Beyond Knitting* uncovers the most current and exciting art being created today by a new generation of knitters who are creating wall art, sculpture and installation. Each of the artists selected for this exhibition transforms the simple notion of needles and yarn with new techniques and fibers to create work that is haunting, humorous, political and personal.”

The exhibition includes ethereal wire sculptures by Czech artist Blanka Sperkova, who developed her own technique of finger-knitting fine wire with a basic looping stitch to create human and animal representations as well as abstract forms. The result is an interplay of the sculpted forms and the transparency of the knitted wire in multi-layered, textured pieces that play with light and shadow.

Lindsay Obermeyer’s surprising work deals with issues of genetic inheritance, aging, and motherhood. Her knitted sweaters with their unusual appendages manifest the hidden nature of her own inner worrisome thoughts and issues. “On the surface her pieces are bright, humorous and attractive, but there is a darker, deeper content to this work that reflects questions and concerns we all face,” said Corsini.

The artists included in the exhibition are: Katharine Cobey, Donna Lish, Janet Morton, Kerry Mosley, Mark Newport, Lindsay Obermeyer, Karen Paust, Karen Searle, Adrienne Sloane and Blanka Sperkova. Two programs will be offered in conjunction with the exhibition: “Artful Knit: A Sculptural Approach to Knitting” is a hands-on workshop with co-curator and artist Adrienne Sloane, Saturday, June 21, from 1-4:30pm. “The New World of Knitting” is a slide lecture by Sloane, Sunday, June 22 from 1-2 pm. For details, pricing and reservation information visit www.sjqquiltmuseum.org

Pun Intended: The Appliquéd Wit of Dorothy Vance

“Dorothy Vance is known for her unique, clever and humanly charming folk art quilts,” said Corsini. “We’re delighted to be able to present the original work and vision of an imaginative and irrepressible artistic personality.”

Throughout her life, Vance engaged in various sorts of arts and crafts including pottery, tile making, bread making, writing, and graphic design. In 1977, Vance began to stitch, and continued to create new works until her death in February 2007 at the age of 77. She combined her writing and sewing skills to embed clever irony and wit into such quilts as the award-winning *Presidents*; the limerick-filled quilt *There Was An Old Man*; and *Odd Couples*, a humorous pairing of icons from history and popular culture who share the same last name, such as Nat and Lana Turner, Karl and Harpo Marx, and James and Marilyn Monroe.

Bob Shaw, a curator and appraiser, wrote of her work, “Vance used her stitched and appliquéd art to express her political views and wide ranging interests in wryly humorous and complexly allusive ways. Most of her quilts feature cartoon-like caricatures of historical and contemporary figures, and many incorporate her own humorous verse, which compares favorably with the work of Ogden Nash.”

The San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles is the first museum of its kind in the United States and in 2005 was named one of the top 10 attractions in San Jose. Museum and Museum Store hours are: 10:00am-5:00pm Tuesday through Sunday; closed Mondays and major holidays. Admission is \$6.50 general; \$5 students and seniors; and free to museum members and children under 13. Admission is free on the first Friday of each month. The San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles is located at 520 South First Street in downtown San Jose. For more information, call 408-971-0323 or visit www.sjqquiltmuseum.org.

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