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QUILT ART AT 25

Quilt Art is the longest - established group of its kind in Europe, celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2010. It grew out of a desire for a specialist group to represent the best of contemporary British quiltmaking.

At the time, the needs of innovative, experimental and professional quilt artists were not being met by other quilting groups, where the critical parameters were undemanding and the emphasis was on traditional work. Exhibiting quilts in art galleries was still a novelty.

Originally established as a separate group within The Quilters' Guild, Quilt Art later became independent. The seven founder members included such seminal names in British quiltmaking as Pauline Burbidge, Deirdre Amsden, Mary Fogg and Michele Walker.

The aim of the group was and still remains to build on its reputation for integrity of expression and quality of craftsmanship, and to achieve greater recognition of the quilt as an art form.



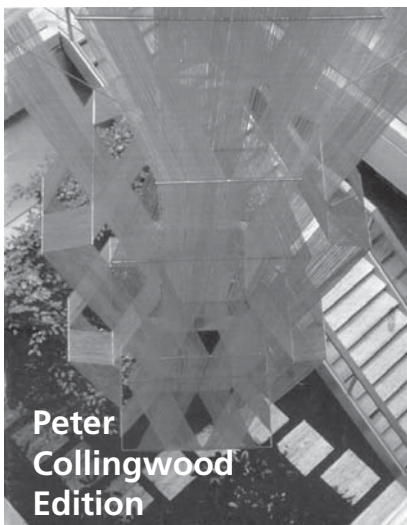
To this end there is a rigorous selection process. First, members consider an applicant's work by viewing slides or digital images, and then, if successful, the applicant is invited for interview. In such a small group - today there are 21 members - it is important that every member is prepared to take an active role in running the group, which holds a major touring exhibition every two years or so, accompanied by a full-colour book. This generates a good deal of administration.

The group has exhibited in museums and galleries all over Britain and many parts of Europe, as well as in Japan and Canada and is planning an exhibition to tour the United States.

There are now many groups across Europe representing quilt artists, and the idea of artists choosing to work with fabric and thread is more widely accepted, but Quilt Art remains distinctive because of the quality of the work and its international membership. More than half the members come from outside Britain, including Germany, Belgium, Holland, France, Denmark, Hungary and one member is from the USA.

The 25th anniversary exhibition **Quilt Art at 25** opens at the Bankfield Museum, Halifax from July 17th to August 29th 2010, and then tours to Quay Arts in the Isle of Wight, The Quilt Museum in York, Gloucester Museum and Rhyl Library Arts Centre, Wales, before travelling to Europe. Details can be found on www.quiltart.org.uk. It will be accompanied by a book which will include quilts from the exhibition and images from members' studios showing their working practices. *Above, bookmark by Sara Impey*

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For those who wish to review the life of the remarkable Peter Collingwood, who died during 2008, don't miss the publication featured here. His legacy will certainly live on.

The summer 2009 edition of The JOURNAL (UK) really does justice to 'the most important British weaver of the last 50 years.'

It is well illustrated and inspiring, with an opening tribute by Jason Collinwood.

For me, it was a privilege to have met Peter Collingwood and to have learned from his many excellent books, a sentiment that can be echoed by many.
Janet De Boer