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***Art Quilts: Contemporary Expressions from the Collection of  
John M. Walsh III***

**Morris Museum January 13 through April 25, 2010**

(Morristown NJ)— More than 35 art quilts from the collection of New Jersey resident John M. Walsh III will be on view at the Morris Museum from January 13 through April 25, 2010. Representing the creative genius of highly skilled and academically trained studio artists, *Art Quilts: Contemporary Expressions from the Collection of John M. Walsh III* explores the intriguing fusion of materials and techniques that are redefining the contemporary quilt movement. The artists whose work appears in this exhibition have pioneered innovative design and construction techniques, transforming textiles into objects of phenomenal expressive depth.

**An opening night preview reception will be held on Wednesday, January 13 at 6:30 p.m.** Admission to the reception is \$10 for museum members; \$20 for non-members. Join collector John Walsh for an exclusive introduction to the art quilt movement and a private preview of the exhibition. Light refreshments will be served. Call for tickets: 973.971.3713.

**Docent-led tours** of the exhibition, included with museum admission, are offered on Sundays at 1:30 and 2:30 p.m. **Group packages** are available for 10 or more, and include a private docent-led tour of the exhibition, gift shop discount, and an optional catered lunch for an additional fee. Advance reservations are required for groups, and may be made by calling 973.971.3743.

The exhibition is supported, in part, by a grant from the New Jersey Department of State, Division of Travel and Tourism, and the Kiwanis Club of Randolph.

### **About Art Quilts and the Artists**

This exhibition celebrates art quilts as compelling works of art. These quilts were created by highly skilled and academically trained studio artists who have pioneered innovative design and construction techniques, transforming textiles into objects of phenomenal expressive depth. The artists featured in this exhibition include renowned quilt artists such as Teresa Agnew, Nancy Crow, Michael James, Karen Perrine and Joy Saville as well as artists who are lesser known in the field. New Jersey is represented in the exhibition by Joy Saville of Princeton, and Princeton Junction-based artist Carol Schepps. The quilts on view range from painterly landscapes to narrative works, to colorful abstractions and distinctly sculptural forms. Fiber may be combined with ceramics, wood, or digital imagery, moving this artistic expression from its roots in the folk tradition to a fully realized and often experimental expression of fiber arts.

The *Art Quilts* exhibition is organized into five sections to foster greater understanding of the art quilt medium:

**(1) That's Art?** This first section of the exhibition champions art quilts as a valid and visually compelling art form that retains a clear connection to the folk art quilts from which they originated. These quilts also celebrate studio art quilting as a vital component of the fiber arts.

**(2) Methods and Materials** While art quilts retain the structural characteristics of a quilt - composed of fabric with two distinct layers that are bound together - art quilters greatly expanded the construction methods used, and incorporated new and unusual materials. The quilts on view include a variety of construction methods, ranging from the unique strip piece method of artist Joy Saville to the use of computer technology to create images not possible by other means. Other

works in this section are embellished with buttons, beads, mirrors, ceramics, thin layers of wood, oil and acrylic paint, and the inventive use of old materials.

**(3) The Natural World** This section explores how nature has inspired art quilters with a great variety of visual forms, patterns and perspectives. Velda Newman, whose oversized *Geranium* greets visitors at the entrance to the exhibition, takes a realistic approach. Other artists, such as Pauline Burbidge and Therese May, depict the natural world more abstractly, while Karen Perrine incorporates a more painterly style, reflecting the influence of Japanese art and nature photography.

**(4) Narrative Quilts** This section features art quilts that relate stories in which imagery is influenced by the message the artist hopes to convey. For example, in *The Sower*, Denise Burge celebrates the strength of her grandmother depicted as the dominant image of a crow. The mixed media work of Susan Shie contains intimate diaries of a personal nature, along with commentary on contemporary concerns.

**(5) Inspirations** This section includes a selection of works that exemplify some of the artists' sources of inspiration – from seemingly traditional quilt patterns to graphic design to maps and architecture. Throughout the exhibition are examples in which quilt artists have drawn inspiration from great masters of the art world, including Monet, Seurat, and Georgia O'Keeffe.

### **About the collector**

John M. Walsh III, a Martinsville, NJ resident, is nationally recognized as a major collector of art quilts. Walsh's collection currently includes over 80 quilts, including works commissioned by this discerning and passionate collector. Walsh describes his perceptions as he discovered the art quilt field, and developed an appreciation for the history and breadth of this medium: "I began to have a feel for the wide range of creative approaches different artists brought to their work. I started to understand the art quilt as offering unique opportunities for expression beyond other media such as painting, sculpture and printmaking. [And it left] no room for any doubt about the difference between art quilts and other quilts. This really is a new artistic medium."

He has said that he collects these unique art objects not only for their beauty and creativity, but also because collecting has allowed him to learn from and about the artists.

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMMING**

### **“Calling all Collectors: Succession Planning for Your Collection”**

**Thursday Feb 25, 6.30 p.m.**

#### **FREE**

Join John Hemmendinger, CPA; trust and estate attorney Ronnie Powell, Esq.; Steven Miller, Executive Director of the Morris Museum; and collector John M. Walsh III for a panel discussion of the issues related to the long term plans for your collection. For reservations, please call 973.971.3713.

### **Workshop: Contemporary Photo Collage and Mixed Media**

**Saturdays, February 27 and March 6, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

**\$80/members; \$90 non-members**

During the first session, professional photographer and instructor Nancy Ori, MS, will lead a highlights tour of the Art Quilts exhibition that will examine design, color, mixed media and the use of found objects. The second session is the hands-on studio portion of the workshop, when students will design and create their own collages using some of the concepts, methods and materials they explored in the gallery. Light refreshments will be served. To register, call 973.971.3718.

## **Children’s Programs**

**Friday, Jan. 15, 10 a.m.**

### ***Tot Tours: Art Quilts***

Tot Tours is a program for very young children and their caregivers. Explore colors, shapes and materials in the exhibition through a mini gallery tour, story

reading and arts and crafts. Free with museum admission. Pre-registration is not required.

**Wednesday, Feb. 17, 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.**

***Art Sampler Series: Quilts as Canvas***

Grades 4 – 8 Members: \$10/student; Non-members \$12/student

Students will explore the exhibition, *Art Quilts: Contemporary Expressions from the Collection of John M. Walsh III* with museum educators, and then create their own art quilt squares using a variety of materials (fabric, paint, beads, feathers and other textiles).

Pre-registration is required. Space is limited. Please call 973.971.3718 to register.

**Thursday, Feb. 18 4 – 7 p.m.**

***Open Art Workshop: Make an Art Quilt Square***

All ages. Members: \$4/child Non-members: \$5/child

Join museum educators to create an art quilt square. Drop in anytime during the session to participate.

### **About the Morris Museum**

The Morris Museum explores and celebrates the arts, sciences and humanities through exhibitions, educational programs, performing arts and special events. The museum recently celebrated its 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and serves over 200,000 adults and children each year. Funding for this exhibition has been made possible, in part, by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

The Morris Museum, located at 6 Normandy Heights Road (at the corner of Columbia Turnpike) in Morristown, NJ, is open Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Thursday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; and Sunday, 1-5 p.m. Admission to the museum is \$10 for adults and \$7 for children, students and senior citizens.

Admission is free for museum members and is free to the public every Thursday between 5 and 8 p.m. For more information, call 973-971-3700, or visit [www.morrismuseum.org](http://www.morrismuseum.org).

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