



NEWS RELEASE

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PATTERN AND PURPOSE

American Quilts from Shelburne Museum

(Omaha, NE) – Shelburne Museum was the first American museum to exhibit quilts as works of art, a testament to the trailblazing vision of museum founder Electra Havemeyer Webb (1888-1960) and her passion for fine, folk, and decorative arts. Fascinated by design elements of color, pattern, line, and construction, and eager to recover a quintessentially "American" style of material culture, she established the core of Shelburne's collection through the personal gift or purchase of over 400 historic bedcoverings in the 1950s. *Pattern and Purpose* pulls back the covers on these everyday household companions that can transcend the commonplace.

Pattern and Purpose is organized by Shelburne Museum, Shelburne, Vermont. The exhibition opens to the public at Joslyn Art Museum on Saturday, October 6, and continues through January 6, 2019.

Throughout the history of quilt-making, the finest pieces were often made to be admired rather than used. Brought out of cupboards and trunks on special occasions, highly-prized bedcovers linked family and community histories, bridging the gap between domestic life and public display. Young women often created quilts as part of their dowries, and quilts were gifted as expressions of friendship, devotion, or charity. By the middle of the nineteenth century, there were increasing public venues for their display, including state and county fairs, where adept quilt-makers competed for prizes and local renown. Today, quilt-making is recognized as an art form in its own right, revealing creative expression through their thoughtful design and careful execution and carrying the unique hand of their makers as clearly as a painting or sculpture might.



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Pattern and Purpose: American Quilts from Shelburne Museum at Joslyn Art Museum

Bringing together thirty-two masterpieces made between the first decades of the 1800s and the turn of the twenty-first century, *Pattern and Purpose* ranges from early whole-cloth quilts created for warmth and utility, to carefully-pieced Lemoyne stars, embroidered botanical "best quilts," and contemporary art quilts. Bold in design and pattern, they reveal the skill of their makers, from complex geometric designs that would feel at home in a gallery of Pop Art, to delicate patterns drawn from nature. By placing these quilts on the museum wall, we gain an expanded sense of what art can be, and recognize how invention and discovery can be found in the most familiar of places.

IMAGE: (PAGE 1) Unidentified maker, *Applique Roses and Tulips Quilt*, 1840-1860, cotton, 90 x 87 in., Collection of Shelburne Museum, 1959-176.2. Photography by Andy Duback.

Exhibition-Related Publication

An exhibition-related book, *Art of the Needle: 100 Masterpiece Quilts from the Shelburne Museum*, is available for purchase in Joslyn's Hitchcock Museum Shop. \$24.95 (Member price: \$22.46).

Exhibition Tickets and Tours

Pattern and Purpose is a ticketed exhibition: \$10 for general public adults; \$5 college students with ID (tickets for those with a UNMC student ID are free; all college students with ID receive free tickets on November 3 and 4); free for members and youth ages 17 and younger. Special Thursday pricing (4–8 pm):

\$5 for general public adults. All visitors, including members, must obtain a ticket at the admissions desk for entrance to the exhibition. Programs with visits to the exhibition will be priced accordingly for general public adults.

Docent-guided tours of the exhibition are offered weekly (ticket pricing applies; view the calendar of events at www.joslyn.org for tour offerings).

Exhibition Mobile Tour

Free Wi-Fi is available in all Joslyn galleries. Guests may use their own web-enabled mobile device or borrow one of Joslyn's to access the dual language *Pattern and Purpose* mobile tour. Dial (402) 881-3601 for English or (402) 972-4031 for Spanish; or visit www.joslyn.org > Education > Multimedia; or scan the QR code at the entrance to the exhibition; or read the audio script, available for hearing impaired visitors (access it through the web app). Presented by Joslyn and OnCell.

Group Tours

Joslyn has pieced together the perfect Museum excursion for groups! For \$25 per person, groups enjoy a self-guided tour of *Pattern and Purpose*, a boxed lunch in Café Durham*, and a 10% discount on purchases in the Hitchcock Museum Shop. For an additional \$50 per group, a docent will present a guided tour of the exhibition (or permanent collection). Reservations required four weeks in advance. Visit the *Pattern and Purpose* page at www.joslyn.org for online reservations or contact Karla Lechtenberger, Tour Coordinator, at (402) 661-3823 or kl@joslyn.org.

*Choose a beef, ham, turkey, chicken salad, or tuna salad sandwich on a variety of bread options or vegetarian caprese tortilla wrap—all served with seasonal fruit, salad du jour, and gourmet cookie—OR a classic chef's salad served with roll and cookie. All lunches include coffee/iced tea/water service.

Exhibition Programs & Events

Friday, October 5

Members Preview Reception; 5:30–8 pm

On Friday evening, October 5, members are invited to a private discussion and reception celebrating *Pattern and Purpose*. At 6 pm in the Witherspoon Concert Hall, members will enjoy a talk by special guest Tom Denenberg, Director of

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Pattern and Purpose: American Quilts from Shelburne Museum at Joslyn Art Museum

Shelburne Museum. The presentation will be followed by exhibition viewing in the Pavilion galleries and complimentary light hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar in the fountain court. Joslyn members receive invitations. To join Joslyn, visit www.joslyn.org.

Monday, October 8

Members Day; Noon–3 pm

On Monday, October 8, the Museum will open the *Pattern and Purpose* exhibition exclusively for Joslyn members. From noon to 3 pm, members show their membership card at the admissions desk for tickets to the exhibition. Gallery tours will be offered at 12:30 pm and 2:30 pm. Each talk is limited to 30 people on a first come, first served basis (participants will be asked to sign up upon arrival on October 8 as no reservations will be taken ahead of time for tours). Joslyn members receive invitations. To join Joslyn, visit www.joslyn.org.

Sunday, October 21 @ 2 pm

What the Appraiser Sees: Quilt Valuation and Care

This talk is free, however, those wishing to see the *Pattern and Purpose* exhibition must obtain an exhibition ticket.

American Quilter's Society (AQS) Certified Quilt Appraiser Jennifer Perkins will lead you through the need for a quilt appraisal, what that involves, the various kinds of appraisals, and the uses for each one. She will also discuss the care and repurposing of quilts.

Perkins grew up sleeping under a Sunbonnet Sue quilt made by her great-grandmother. After learning to quilt in 1984, she attended quilt restoration conferences and started a quilt restoration business. After achieving merit as a National Quilt Association Certified Quilt Judge, she earned her AQS certification as a quilt appraiser. Perkins is a member of the Omaha Quilters' Guild and Nebraska State Quilt Guild, and is the current President of Professional Association of Appraisers – Quilted Textiles.

Saturday & Sunday, November 3 & 4

Free College Weekend

During regular public hours (10 am to 4 pm) on Saturday and Sunday, November 3 and 4, anyone with a valid college ID will receive free tickets to *Pattern and Purpose*. Regular ticket price for college students is \$5 (tickets for those with a UNMC student ID are always free).

Saturday, November 3; 11 am–3 pm

Block Party / Public Lecture / Panel Discussion

Admission is free to the day's events (listed below), however guests wishing to see the exhibition must obtain a ticket.

Block Party, 11 am–1 pm

Guests may drop in to contribute to the **Omaha Modern Quilt Guild's "improv quilt."** Participants of all ages may design and sew a quilt square from fabric scraps. Guild members will combine the squares to form a finished quilt for display in January. Also, everyone is invited to add a piece to **Joslyn's collaborative cardboard quilt fort.** Started at Maha Music Festival this summer, Joslyn wants many hands represented in this exhibition-inspired community project! Visitors may create a pattern, write a note, or share a memory on a cardboard diamond. Museum staff will piece the diamonds together throughout the fall, with a final installation scheduled for Joslyn's community gallery in January. In addition to November 3, visitors may contribute to both quilts on **Saturdays, December 1 and January 5, at the Museum, 11 am–1 pm each day.**

Those interested in having their class/organization/group participate in the cardboard quilt fort but are unable to make it to the Museum may contact Maranda Allbritten, Community Outreach Coordinator, at mallbritten@joslyn.org to schedule a session at your location.

Public Lecture @ 1 pm; Witherspoon Concert Hall

Making Sense of a Studio Life: 40 Years Plus

Michael James, Professor and Chair, Department of Textiles, Merchandising & Fashion Design, University of Nebraska–Lincoln

Referring to his textile work, people often ask **Michael James** "Why are these quilts? Why aren't they paintings?" Neither 'fish nor fowl', James' quilts have been difficult for some people to categorize. In this talk, James will address the ambiguity inherent in his work and reflect on over forty years of studio production.

James has shown his work in exhibitions around the world. His quilts are included in the collections of the Museum of Arts and Design (New York City), Baltimore Museum of Art, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Shelburne Museum (Shelburne, VT), and the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum (Washington, D.C.), among others. James is a past recipient of two National Endowment for the Arts Visual Artist Fellowships, and he was named a Fellow of the American Craft Council in 2001. In 2015, the Renwick Alliance awarded him its Master of the Medium Award in textiles for lifetime accomplishment.

Panel Discussion @ 2 pm; Witherspoon Concert Hall

Continuity, Change, and Nontraditional Quilting

Quilts convey the complexity of human emotion. Hear from three noted artists (highlighted below) all working with nontraditional quilt forms to achieve powerful communicative, transformative effects. Discussion moderator Carolyn Ducey will open the program with a brief quilt history, from traditional quilting to current practices in contemporary studio quilting. Panelists:

Michael James (*see details above*)

Celeste Butler is a multidisciplinary fiber textile artist and storyteller based in Omaha. She has worked on several community quilting projects with North Omaha residents, celebrating the area's growth and future, and developed in-school artist-in-residence programs to teach quilting and storytelling to the next generation. Butler is a 2018 Fiber Artist program mentor with Joslyn's Kent Bellows Mentoring Program and Girls Inc., and will teach this fall's "Quilts: Connected Stories" studio class for teens and adults at Joslyn.

Shea Wilkinson has been sewing since childhood. While teaching English in Mexico, Wilkinson became passionate about fiber arts and returned to the United States to pursue her career as an artist. She has exhibited widely in national juried exhibitions and has received numerous awards, including the James Renwick Alliance's Chrysalis Award for a distinguished emerging artist in 2016. Shea lives and works in Omaha.

Carolyn Ducey, Ph.D., is curator of collections at the International Quilt Study Center & Museum at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She has curated a number of exhibitions, including "Chintz Appliqué: From Imitation to Icon" and "The Collector's Eye: Amish Quilts from the International Quilt Study Center Collections." She is also author of the monograph *Chintz Appliqué: from Imitation to Icon* (2008), co-author of *What's in a Name: Inscribed Quilts* (2012), and an editor of *American Quilts in the Industrial Age: 1760-1870* (University of Nebraska Press, 2018).

November 30–December 2; 10 am–4 pm daily

'Tis the Season for Quilts!

Ring in the holidays at Joslyn with a special weekend exhibition of quilts from the International Quilt Study Center & Museum in Lincoln, Nebraska. The eight appliqué quilts on display, selected for their striking red and green patterns, feature traditional American designs dating to the mid-nineteenth century. This pop-up exhibition is on view in the Conagra Brands Atrium and included in free general Museum admission.

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Pattern and Purpose: American Quilts from Shelburne Museum at Joslyn Art Museum

Thursday, December 6 @ 6:30 pm (cash bar @ 5 pm)

Piecing It All Together: Quilts That Inspire

Free with regular exhibition admission (special Thursday evening pricing of \$5 per ticket for general public adults).

A variety of voices from the local quilting community will speak in the exhibition galleries about select objects from the collection of Shelburne Museum – offering insight, personal reflections, and shedding light on the ability of historic quilts to inspire, engage, and delight contemporary quilters. Featured speakers include:

Iowa-born **Shirley Neary** has always seen herself as an artist, living each day as creatively as possible. She views quilts as art pieces, even the traditional ones. A lifetime interest in art and art history led her to return to school in 1992 and earn a BA in studio art from the University of Nebraska Omaha with an emphasis on drawing. Neary made her first quilt soon after. It was the beginning of a 20-year passion of creating and exhibiting art quilts. She was honored in 2004 with the Nebraska Arts Council's Individual Artist Fellowship for her "Small Town Iowa Stories; Growing Up in the '60s" series.

Lola Jenkins has brought a unique vision through her art quilts, which reflect the joy and freedom of pursuing her passion. Without any formal background in sewing or art, she developed her talent, and, through her fearless approach to creating art quilts, has evolved to Master Quilter status. Jenkins states, "I didn't know the rules, so I couldn't break the rules of quilting." Her quilts have won numerous first place ribbons and top awards: best of show, judge's choice, and best use of color. She gives programs, trunk shows, workshops, and classes around the world and is currently an instructor with Craftsyt.com.

Born in Omaha, **Deborah Bunting's** grandmother was a needlework specialist and textile artist who taught her to knit, crochet, and hand sew, and encouraged her imagination. Bunting later progressed to textile arts and began creating art quilts. Through her textile artwork, she has sought to create a figuratively tactile link between the African American community and the world of art. She was an artist-in-residence for the Nebraska Arts Council, lead artist on the Bemis Mural Project at Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, and included in the exhibition *A Greater Spectrum: African American Artists of Nebraska 1912–2010* at the Museum of Nebraska Art in 2010–11. Bunting recently retired from the Nebraska Arts Council, where she served as the Heritage Arts Manager. She narrated the *Pattern and Purpose* mobile tour and is presently engaged with Joslyn as Special Projects Coordinator for the 2019 exhibition *30 Americans*.

Thursday, December 13; 6:30 pm (cash bar @ 5 pm)

Music & Masterpieces: Pattern and Purpose

Free with regular exhibition admission (special Thursday evening pricing of \$5 per ticket for general public adults).

Opera Omaha's Holland Community Opera Fellows will weave a tapestry of sound in the *Pattern and Purpose* galleries among the quilts on view. The performance will feature music inspired by themes of embroidery and quilting, with songs and arias by Schubert, Gounod, and more.

Other Programs at Joslyn

Many of Joslyn's regularly scheduled programs will feature *Pattern and Purpose*-inspired themes this fall and winter. Visit www.joslyn.org for complete details.

- **Stroller Tours** (Wednesday, October 17): Joslyn offers docent-guided tours designed for moms, dads, and caregivers to look at and talk about art with other adults, while being mindful of young ones in arms and strollers. Guests gather on the Strauss Bridge at 9:30 am for complimentary refreshments, then head to the galleries at 10 am for tours of Joslyn's collections and exhibitions. Crying babies welcome! On October 17, the tour will feature the *Pattern and Purpose* exhibition. Free for Joslyn members and infants/toddlers; \$10 for general public adults (includes exhibition ticket). Space is limited; reservations are requested. Sign-up at least one week in advance at www.joslyn.org > Visit > Kids Programs.

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Pattern and Purpose: American Quilts from Shelburne Museum at Joslyn Art Museum

- **Art Encounters** (Thursday, October 18; 10:30 am): Art lovers, from the well-seasoned to the amateur, will enjoy a docent-guided tour of the *Pattern and Purpose* exhibition. \$10 general public adults; \$5 college students with valid ID.
- **Art Camps and Classes**
Joslyn offers classes for all ages this fall, including those devoted to quilting and textiles. Online class registration is available; Joslyn members receive discounted registration. Visit www.joslyn.org > Education > Classes.



JOSLYN
Art Museum

Our Mission — Joslyn Art Museum collects, preserves, and interprets the visual arts of the highest quality, fostering appreciation and enjoyment of art for the benefit of a diverse audience.

Our Vision — To be cherished and respected as a premier art museum.

Joslyn Art Museum showcases art from ancient times to the present. The Museum was a gift to the people of Omaha from Sarah Joslyn in memory of her husband, George, who made his fortune as president of the Western Newspaper Union. The Museum's original 1931 building is one of the finest examples of Art Deco architecture in the nation, with 38 types of marble from seven countries. The Walter and Suzanne Scott Pavilion, a 58,000-square-foot addition built in 1994, was designed by renowned British architect Norman Foster as his first U.S. commission. The Museum features galleries, a 1,000-seat concert hall, fountain court, education technology gallery, lecture hall, classrooms, sculpture garden, café, shop, and Art Works, an interactive space for art exploration.

General Museum Admission: Free (additional charge for general public adult tickets to *Pattern and Purpose*; see page 2).

Regular Museum Hours: Tuesday through Sunday, 10 am–4 pm; late 'til 8 pm on Thursday; closed Monday and major holidays. This year, the Museum is also closed on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, as both are Mondays.

www.joslyn.org | (402) 342-3300 | 2200 Dodge Street | Omaha, NE 68102