

## Dazzling quilts, a proven art form

September 23, 2011 | By Victoria Donohoe, For The Inquirer

For anyone whose attention may have wandered away from close observation of the burgeoning quilt show circuit, "Quilt Art: International Expressions" at Michener Museum will yank you right back: It's a true dazzler. The show's 40 pieces by 24 contemporary quilt artists from nine countries provide a thoughtful, penetrating review of some of the best quiltmaking today.

Quilt Art is Europe's leading advocacy group for innovative quiltmaking. It was founded in Britain in 1985, just as nontraditional quiltmaking was taking hold in Europe due to the influence of American artists and teachers. Its goal, then as now, was to extend the boundaries of the quilt medium and increase recognition of quilts as an art form. Within a mere 20 years, interest in innovative quiltmaking spread to Asia, Africa, South America, every European country, and is going great guns in all 50 states. So Quilt Art was ready to field this, its own debut U.S. tour.

Each artist is displaying older and newer works, revealing evolving experience and maturity in styles and in their assimilation of the technology of our time into both their craft and their imagery.

Bethan Ash of Wales incorporates a number of sight-gags into a quilt called *Cutting the Carbs - Shedding the Pounds*, a madcap mélange of color, words, and shapes that remains amiable because the artist has such a secure grasp of its lively layout. Other standouts are the works of England's Sara Impey and Fenella Davies. And lots more besides.

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James A. Michener Art Museum,

138 S Pine, Doylestown. To Dec. 31. 10-4:30 Tue-Fri, 10-5 Sat, noon-5 Sun. Adults \$12.50. 215-340-9800.

### *Significant Signe*

The Philadelphia Daily News' Signe Wilkinson, the first woman to win a Pulitzer Prize (1992) for editorial cartooning, is displaying 60 examples of her work in a show called "The World in Line!" at Moore College of Art and Design that gets her point across with style and humor.

Wilkinson is clearly at ease in the informal medium of drawing. The sketch, instead of striving for some overall finished quality, frees her to focus on essentials, using a single line to greatest effect and leaving large areas of the paper sheet either empty or blocked out.

Included are selected Philadelphia Daily News editorial cartoons from her 25-year tenure, on subjects ranging from peace and war to education and feminism, as well as some of her "Family Tree" comic strips, whose gardening/environmental themes express her deep affection for the natural world.