

WHAT'S NEW

Last month I wrote about the mandalas that I designed for the art quilt I am currently working on (*Shame and Redemption*).

I have finally begun to slowly stitch them in. I am using a thread color that (mostly) matches the fabric. The purpose of these mandalas is to show how the growth in self-redemption is often hidden and private. It is about finding the light within oneself. It is about creating self-actualization. People may see that a change has occurred in someone, but they are rarely privy to all the work (spiritual, psychological, mental, etc.) that goes into that personal growth. Therefore, in this piece, what one sees is an impression of the mandalas without them being the central focus of the work.

Quilting these mandalas is quite hard work. First, I use a quilting pencil to draw my pattern on the fabric. Normally I would give myself the opportunity to create them more freestyle in the moment. However, I want this piece to use these specific mandalas (as they represent different phases of personal growth) rather than ones I improvise on the spot.

I am using an embroidery foot because the quilt itself is too large and bulky for my machine to use a different foot for these de-



Making Mandalas

signs. There are a lot of shapes and turns in the mandalas, and thus I work very slowly. Any mistakes that I make must remain because the stitches are too small to remove. I don't want to stress and strain the fabric trying to unstitch them for concerns that the fabric will warp or tear.

I have 50 total to make: ten each of five different kinds. I am hoping that next week I will be in the studio full time again to work on these. Fingers crossed I can finish this art piece this Spring!

FAVORITE FINISH

My mother-in-law, Nancy, recently passed away at the wonderful age of 97. It was very sad, albeit not completely unexpected. We had a beautiful service and a lovely celebration of her life afterwards.

I gifted [this lap quilt](#) to my mother-in-law not long after I had made it. It is one of my earliest that I made in my first year of re-acquainting myself with quilting after a decade-plus long hiatus. I designed the pattern with graph paper and colored pencils (old school, I know!) and really enjoyed the creative process



of quilting it.

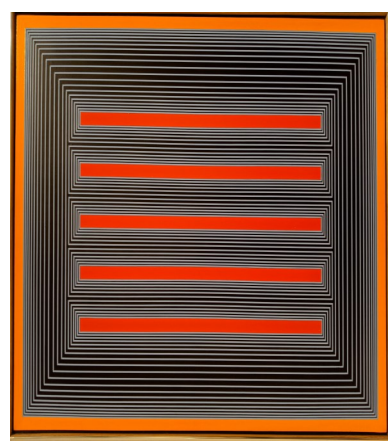
Nancy loved it. She liked its size to warm her lap without feeling encumbered by weight or getting her feet trapped in it. She also liked

the bright colors, saying it boosted her day to see them.

I appreciate how supportive and enthusiastic Nancy always was about my work. She was genuinely interested in seeing it. She often commented on my stitches, or my designs, or the excellent quality of my work. She was one to speak truthfully, so I know she never shined it on for me.

Now that she has passed, this lap quilt has returned to me. I will keep it for myself and remember her supportive words whenever I use it.

INSPIRATION



QUILTATIONS

You are a beacon of light in the world.

CREATING MY OWN NICHE

I started my art journey full time about five years ago. Since then, I have wended my way down the river of self-discovery and self-identity as an artist.

Sometimes I have lain back in my art canoe and let the river take me where it will. I enjoy the leisurely pace this offers. It gives me an opportunity to look around and explore new ideas, new techniques, new creativity without having any set definition of who I am or what I create.

Paradoxically, sometimes this has led me to get lost in a bend or stuck in an oxbow. The very thing that I am trying to avoid (being defined) can be a little too

loose. Certainly, we need a little structure in life! We are not invertebrate jellyfish, after all!

Other times on my journey I have worked my way upstream, fighting against the easy currents of exploration to coerce definition into what I do. That enforced structure has been good for me. Generally, it is I who has created the terms of that structure, but society, other's opinions, and social media are not without their influence. I try to keep those latter voices to a minimum, though.

It seems to be the trend in the art world to "become" a particular artist, to define oneself and one's impact on the world by what we

make or do, to have influence and prestige. Perhaps it is a way for artists to feel important and valued in a world that tends to value making money over making art. I'm not offering that up for a debate. I'm simply wondering.

But certainly, right now, I don't want to define myself too precisely as an artist. I feel it will limit my creativity and my opportunities (of all sorts), and I am enjoying the wanderlust of this journey. Maybe what I will "become" is just what I already am: ever-changing.

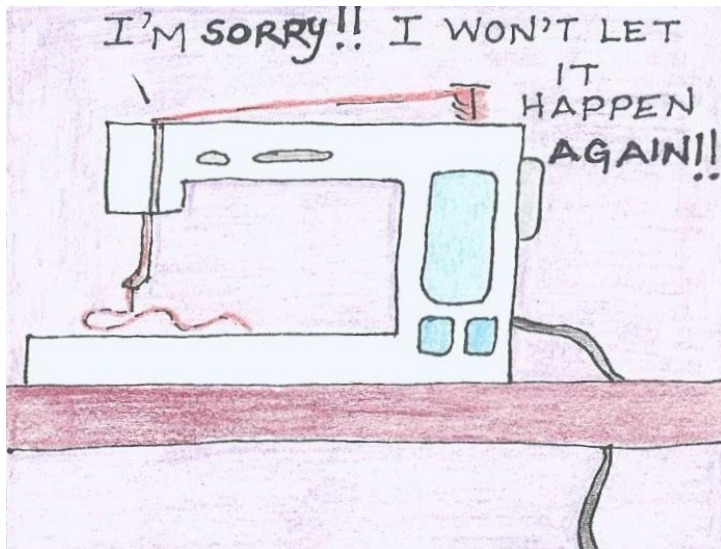
[To read more on my journey as an artist, click here](#)

Episode 15: Rampage!

Oh no! There's trouble in the studio!

Check out all the episodes of *Flaminia and The Machine* [here!](#)

FLAMINIA AND THE MACHINE



ARTSEWDIFFERENT, LLC

SEW WHAT'S DIFFERENT

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UNIQUE QUILTED AND FABRIC ART

As an artist, my passion is to create unique quilted and fabric art. I was always drawn to sewing as a child, and now I am able to live my dream of artistic creativity through fabric. I am inspired to use materials and techniques that range from the traditional to those I make up as needed.

That's what makes it ArtSewDifferent!