

QUILTING SISTAH NEWS



African American Quilt Guild of Oakland

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Summer has arrived! COVID-19 restrictions have been relaxed. Juneteenth has been recognized as a national holiday. We have lots to celebrate as well as lots of ideas for new quilting projects. Now that we can travel, it is time for a fabric shopping road trip! I do not know any quilter's fabric stash that cannot have additions. Many of us are having to deal with the realities of global warming and extremely hot temperatures. Many of you have become creative about continuing to sew in the heat by moving your sewing machines and ironing boards to the shaded places outside of your homes. Wherever you chose to sew, please enjoy yourself!

It is always a pleasure to see many of you at our monthly Zoom meetings. If you have not attended our meetings, I encourage you to join us via Zoom. We have had some exciting speakers. At this time, we do not have an estimated time for returning to an in-person meeting. We must wait until the City of Oakland permits the West Oakland Public Library to open for large groups. Hopefully in mid Fall we will gather again. When we come together, we will celebrate with the sale of our 20th Anniversary Cookbook!

As you settle into summertime, may your days be full of new and exciting adventures. May you connect with family and friends. May you discover new and exciting fabric opportunities. From your summertime experiences, may you find new ideas for quilting projects. I leave you with this quote:

**“Friends and Quilts are Great,
no matter how they are put together!”**

**Blessings,
Marie**

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dear Members: The Oakland Public Library has indicated we may be able to hold our first in-person meeting September 2021. We will need to discuss members' comfort in doing so. We will continue ZOOM meetings from time to time when we have a speaker so that members can attend in ease.

SOCIAL JUSTICE – ONE STITCH AT A TIME

Teri Green

Our June speaker was Sara Trail from the Social Justice Sewing Academy. Please enjoy this article from Teri Green.

In the world of the **Social Justice Sewing Academy (SJSA)**, the sewing circle is wide and far reaching. Founded in 2017, the SJSA delivers hands-on workshops in schools, prisons and community centers throughout the United States. Participants use fiber art to tell stories centered on topics that explore social justice issues including violence.

Once a block is created, a network circle of volunteers embellishes quilt blocks with embroidery, then Sara will host a community workshop bringing volunteers together to create a 20-block quilt or a 2-block banner, another will do the long arm quilting, and another person will finish the quilt or banner by adding binding and quilt sleeve. The finished quilts and banners are displayed in museums, galleries and quilt shows.



Sara Trail, SJSA Founder, learned how to sew at the young age of 4 helping her mother make quilts. At age 13, she wrote a nationally published book, "Sew with Sara" that teaches teens and tweens how to sew cute clothes and accessories for fun and profit. At 15, she starred in a nationally published DVDs, "Cool stuff to Sew With Sara." She then designed two fabric collections, Folkheart and Biology 101, and a pattern collection with Simplicity, "Designed with Love by Sara."

She grew up around a dinner table that was always filled with socially responsible conversations about how to make the world a better place. At 14, she was marching alongside the Reverend Jesse Jackson at the Federal Reserve (San Francisco) to protest against the housing crisis and lack of action by the banking community that was foreclosing on so many homes. But then when

she was 17, sewing took on a new meaning with the killing of an unarmed 17-year old, Trayvon Martin, in 2012. The result was the "Rest in Peace Trayvon" quilt, which was the first time she mixed her passion for sewing with social justice art. The quilt was eventually given by Sara to Trayvon's mother at a Black Lives Matter event.

So, it doesn't come as a surprise that Sara has carved a place combining her love of fiber art and sewing with social justice. In 2016, while an undergraduate at Berkeley, she received a grant and hosted the first summer academy with 15 students. After graduating from the Harvard University Graduate School of Education, she founded the non-profit Social Justice Sewing Academy to be a platform where youth create art that engages and educates communities.

The pandemic has greatly impacted SJSA's ability to host community sew days ... but the vast circle of volunteers keep pushing through completing the work stitch by stitch. To date 300+ blocks, 30+ community quilts, and 100+ banners have been completed. Sara and the SJSA team are forever grateful for the army of volunteers who keep the circle going.

Teri Green



I first became aware of the SJSA after seeing a quilt exhibit at the Pacific International Quilt Festival. However, in 2020, there was controversy when some quilters rejected SJSA's "Injustice" block for the National Quilt Museum's block of the month program. I was shocked that some in the quilt community would reject a simple message such as this and voiced my concerns on their Facebook page.



Earlier this year, I was at my local quilt store in Vacaville and saw that SJSA was hosting a community quilt sew day... so I signed on. I had no idea that Sara and I lived in the same community.

After participating, I encouraged several members of my local group, the Sewlano Fiber Artist Network - most of whom are members of the AAQGO - to participate. My main focus is helping to finish the Remembrance banners.

Each block in the banner tells a story. I'm so overwhelmed that people are being memorialized in a special way. This project has taught me that these art quilts serve as a voice to victims who were people and should be remembered for who they were - not the violence that took them away.

Amal Johnson

I like that SJSA gives recognition to folks that are ignored/forgotten by larger society. I learned as what often happens in many successful large enterprises that it takes a village. I'm happy to be part of this village.



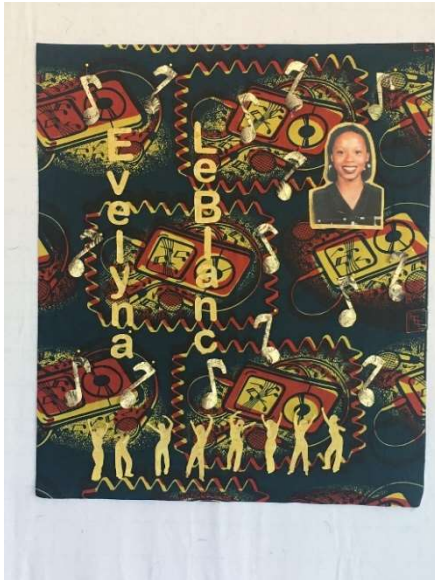
Sally Dickson

SJSA inspires me to keep raising the impact of violence in America. Inspired by Sara's creativity, leadership and commitment to social justice, I have learned how textile art is a powerful way to remember victims of violence.

Sharon Stockman

I feel honored to be a small part in sewing together quilt blocks filled with expressions of social injustice around the country. Every voice deserves to be heard via art expression or words.





Ora Clay

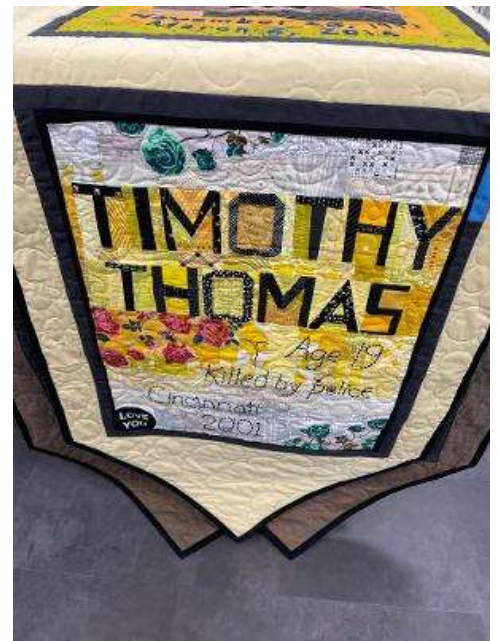
I heard about the project through social media and I was reminded that many of us, or most of us, are touched by the violence in this country. I am reminded when the violence happens wherever, it is a part of somebody's immediate family. My friend lost her beautiful daughter through an act of senseless violence. I have a daughter and I can't imagine the pain for the family. I did this block to say, "Evelyna, you loved to dance, we remember you".



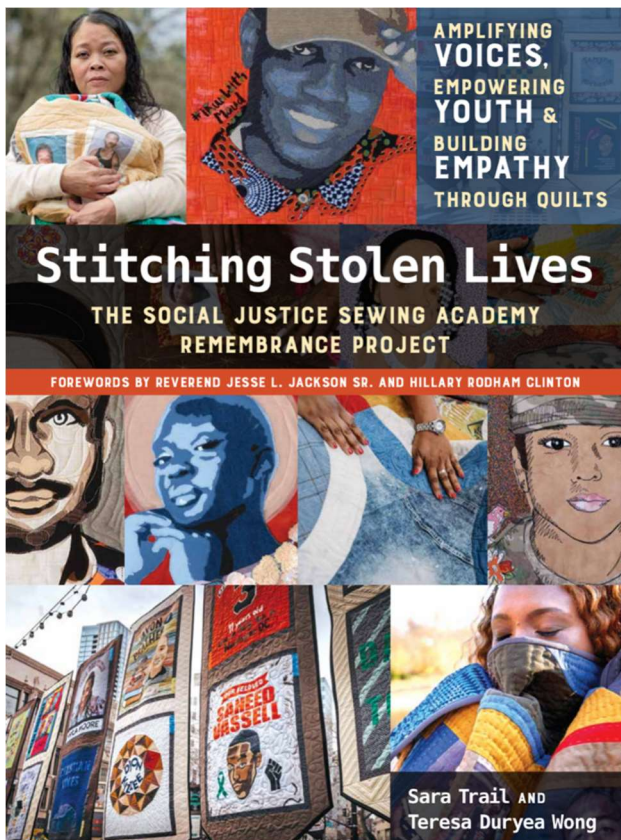
Deborah Reed-Salmon

I started out just being inspired by how young Sara is, and the fact that she started this group of her own fruition because she wants to bring awareness to social issues. It's great to see youths helping one another, and to be able to do so through sewing brings me hope for the continuation of the craft in future generations. It means a lot that these people who died aren't just being forgotten. Transphobia, domestic violence, and police brutality aren't just being swept under the rug, because we aren't forgetting these individuals. They aren't just

victims of circumstances, but rather an inspiration for change. I've learned that each person plays a big part in making this happen. Getting things done takes many hands, so without all of us coming together this couldn't have been successful, and I'm just glad I could do my part.



For more information about how you can participate, check out SJSA at their Website: www.sjsacademy.org - or their Instagram sites: @sjsacademy and @sjsa_remembranceproject



Two new items will be available soon for pre-order:

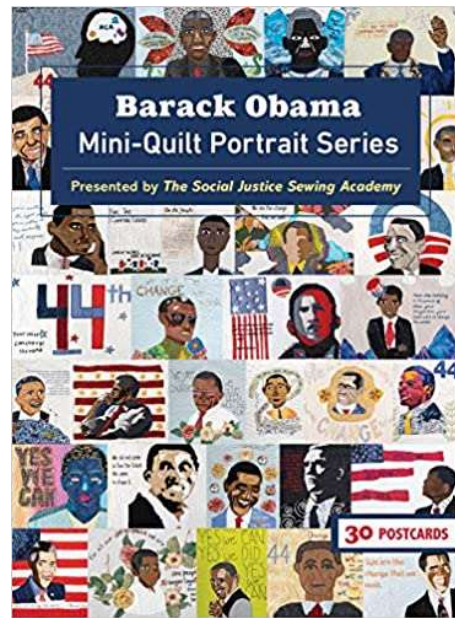
Stitching Stolen Lives: Amplifying Voices, Empowering Youth & Building Empathy Through Quilts (September 2021)

Available for pre-order on SJSA's website and Amazon

Barack Obama Mini-Quilt Portrait Series:

30 Postcards Presented by the Social Justice Sewing Academy

Available for pre-order on Amazon



AAQGO MEMBERS SUPPORTING THE SOCIAL JUSTICE ACADEMY at their June 27th presentation of SJSA memory quilts and remembrance banners.

MEMBER ART SPOTLIGHT

My Billboard Experience - Ora Clay

I must admit my “Billboard” experience was one of the highlights of my quilting journey. Along with family and friends in the Los Angeles area, looking up and seeing my quilt high above the street was a thrill.

It was an affirmation for me and other quilters to have fiber art included along with other artists working in other mediums.

I applied for this exhibition through the Cafe online registry.



<https://artist.callforentry.org/register.php>



Here is the beautiful quilt that was on a billboard in Los Angeles.



And here's the billboard in Los Angeles



**DOLORES PRESLEY WITH HER ESTHER PANCHO SEW EXCELLENCE
AWARD**



New Exhibition featuring the African American Quilt Guild of Oakland

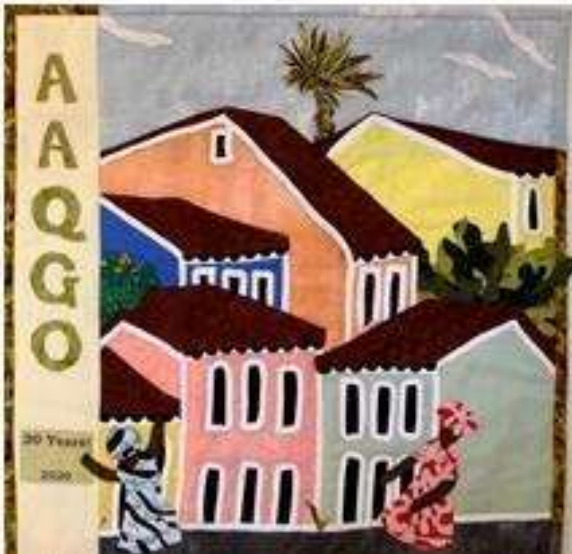
The Alameda County Arts Commission proudly presents an online exhibition featuring artworks from the members of the [African American Quilt Guild of Oakland](#) (AAQGO). This exhibition celebrates the 20th Anniversary of the AAQGO. View the exhibition [here](#).

“We honor the African-American Quilt Guild of Oakland on their 20th Anniversary. The Quilt Guild is an important Oakland-based arts organization focused on the preservation and continuation of the art of quilting and its role in African-American culture. Thank you for celebrating Black art and artists, spreading joy and stories through your artworks, and for uplifting Alameda County.”

– Keith Carson, President of the
Alameda County Board of Supervisors

Founded in 2000, the mission of AAQGO is to preserve and continue the tradition of quilting, to promote fellowship among interested persons in all aspects of quilting, to contribute to the knowledge and appreciation of fine quilting and quilts, and to sponsor and support quilting activities through regular meetings and special events with the community. To learn more about the membership and activities of the AAQGO, click [here](#).

Images (top to bottom): *Ladies Who Quilt*, created by artist Ora Clay. *My Sister, My Friend*, created by artist Cynthia Coats. *Dancing in the Streets*, created by artist Faith Darling. Photos courtesy of the ARTISTS.



THE MANY BENEFITS OF GUILD MEMBERSHIP

- ♥ Fun, friendship and fellowship
- ♥ Workshops eliminate the need to take a lot of quilting classes
- ♥ Someone always has an answer to any quilting-related problem
- ♥ The opportunity to show your work in a supportive and encouraging environment
- ♥ Interesting speakers both from the Guild and from outside
- ♥ Encouragement from other quilters to enter quilt shows, submit your work for publication
- ♥ Great snacks and a fun Holiday party
- ♥ All this, for a membership fee for a year, equivalent to a night at the movies with popcorn and a drink!

Happy Birthday to our friends!

April	May	June
Dolores Vitero Presley – 5 Benita Jones – 10 Amal Johnson – 11 Anita Carse – 17 Katie Wishom – 17 Faith Darling – 20 Sandra Sweeting-Hall – 20 Susie Faye Patrick – 22 Loretta Cohen - 28	Frances Porter – 5 Felicia Germany – 6 Teloca McLinn – 7 Cassandra Knight – 9 Jerry Oyarzo Hickey – 15 Ann Robinson – 21 Loretta Henry – 26 Madlyn Jones – 26 Maria dePorres Taylor - 27	Esther Pancho - 2

OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

September 1, 2020- August 31, 2022

Officers and committee chairpersons can be reached at aaqgoakland@gmail.com or

PO Box 31834, Oakland, CA 94604

OFFICERS	
President	Marie dePorres Taylor
Vice President	Teresa Weyand
Secretary	Rosita Thomas
Treasurer	Dolores Vitero Presley
Historian	Donald Foreman
COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS	
Black History Month Family Workshop	Ann Robinson
Education	Ernestine Tril
Exhibits	Ora Clay, Dolores Vitero Presley
Membership	Loretta Henry, Catherine Mukai
Newsletter	Teresa Weyand
Sunshine	Evelyn Johnson
Website	Ann Robinson
Worthy Causes	Deborah Butler
SUSPENDED OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES FOR 2018-2020	
Parliamentarian	
Library	
Opportunity Quilt	
Publicity	
Retreat	

MEMBERSHIP: Membership shall be open to anyone interested in the purpose and objectives of this Guild, and payment of annual dues. No discrimination shall be made with regard to race, color, creed, or national origin.

A Publicly supported organization – 509 (a) (3) – Federal ID No. 91-2100443