

Patty Kennedy-Zafred

pattykz.com

Artist Statement:

Utilizing the medium of textiles and printmaking, my objective is to create thought provoking narratives to develop a visual dialogue with the viewer. The interpretation of each piece is conceived through the lens of individual experiences, memories, or perspectives. The work marries a lifelong fascination with photography, history, and stitch, reflecting faces of pride and dignity, sometimes under challenging circumstances. The agricultural landscape of rural America has changed dramatically since 1900, when half of the population lived and worked on farms. That number now rests at just two percent, while more than one-third of American farmers are over the age of 65.

Every week, faced with economic hardship, long hours, and corporate competition, hundreds of farmers leave their land for good. The independent family farm is an essential part of our diverse American fabric, representing strength, tenacity, patience, and perseverance. Inspired by 1930's U.S. Farm Security Administration photographs, and part of my American Portraits Series, these works, created with vintage feed sacks, depict the often forgotten men, women and children, who struggled to maintain their own land, or working as tenant farmers, with the hope of a better future. Their faces reflect the determination, pride and hard work required to survive against both natural, racial, and cultural obstacles. The hard work and sacrifice of these individuals is reflected in the faces of their descendants, whose numbers continue to diminish. (Original images courtesy Library of Congress.)

Biography:

Patty Kennedy-Zafred creates thought-provoking narratives using fabric, dyes, silkscreens, and ink to develop a visual dialogue with the viewer. The interpretation of each piece is conceived through the lens of individual experiences, memories, or perspectives. Her quilts marry a lifelong fascination with photography, history, and stitch, often reflecting faces of pride and dignity, sometimes under challenging circumstances.

Kennedy-Zafred has been telling stories through the medium of textiles for over thirty years. Her prize-winning work has been exhibited in major national and international exhibitions, including Fiberart International, CraftForms, Art of the State Pennsylvania, Excellence in Fibers, Quilt National, Visions, Artist as Quiltmaker, Fantastic Fibers, and numerous invitational exhibitions and print publications. Her work has traveled worldwide, and is part of the permanent collections of the State Museum of Pennsylvania, The Textile Museum, Washington, DC, The International Quilt Museum, Lincoln, NE, San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles, Emory University, and multiple private collections.

Exhibitions:

2024 *Traversing Textiles*, 2024, Ohio Craft Museum, Columbus, OH
2024 *Women's Voices, Women's Votes, Women's Rights*, Clinton Presidential

Center,
2023 *International Fiber Arts XI*, Sebastopol Center for the Arts, Sebastopol, CA
2021-2023 *Food Justice: Growing a Healthier Community Through Art*, 2021-2023,
Contemporary Craft Gallery, Solo Exhibition at BNY Mellon Gallery,
Pittsburgh, PA, and traveling exhibition
2020 *Deeds Not Words: The Power of Persistence*, 2020, National Quilt
Museum, Paducah, KY, and traveling exhibition through 2022