POLLINATORS



POLLINATORS

This exhibition explores the beauty, diversity and significance of pollinators and their impact on our future. Join us in raising awareness of pollinators and their importance through art. Selected pieces highlight the crucial role pollinators play in sustaining Earth's ecosystems.

Thank you to the Detroit Zoological Society which is providing education materials for this exhibition.

Please visit saqa.art/pollinators for artwork images, videos, exhibition schedule, and pricing information.

SAQA is grateful for the generous support of Frank Klein who made this exhibition possible.

Cover artwork by Laura Wasilowski

Catalog design by YellowDog, Denver, Colorado

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SAQA™
STUDIO ART QUILT ASSOCIATES

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ABOUT

Studio Art Quilt Associates, Inc. (SAQA) is an international nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote the art quilt, "a creative visual work that is layered and stitched or that references this form of stitched layered structure."

Founded in 1989, SAQA now has more than 4,000 members worldwide: artists, teachers, collectors, gallery owners, museum curators, and art quilt enthusiasts.

SAQA is dedicated to bringing beautiful, thought-provoking, cutting-edge artwork to venues across the globe. With access to a museum-quality exhibition program, SAQA members challenge the boundaries of art and change perceptions about contemporary fiber art. These exhibitions not only give artists the opportunity to show their work, but also expose the public to the variety and complexity of the art quilt medium.

In addition, SAQA documents the art quilt movement through exhibition catalogs. These serve not only as preservation and educational tools, but also as sources of inspiration and beauty to be returned to again and again.

To learn more about SAQA and art quilts, visit ***www.saqa.com.***

ESSAY

The Importance of Pollinators

By David Dimitrie, PhD

Think of the last time you took a bite out of an apple. Or drank a cup of coffee. Remember the last time you walked through a meadow of vibrant flowers in springtime and marveled at the colors and the smells. None of this would be possible without pollinators. Pollinators are a diverse group of animals including bees, butterflies, moths, birds, bats, and beetles who act as primary facilitators of plant reproduction. Pollinators are responsible for the reproduction of more than 85% of the world's flowering plants and approximately 75% of global food crops. Their role is so fundamental that their health is recognized as a direct indicator of broader ecosystem stability and human food security.

Pollination is a keystone service that holds entire ecosystems together. By moving pollen between flowers, pollinators ensure the genetic diversity and survival of entire plant communities. This, in turn, provides the structural foundation for habitats that support thousands of other species. For instance, the seeds and fruits resulting from insect pollination are vital food sources for wildlife ranging from native songbirds to black bears. Without pollinators, many plant species would face extinction, leading to a cascading effect that could ultimately lead to the collapse of entire food webs.

For humans, the value of pollinators cannot be overstated. Pollinators are not just ecologically important—they are economically invaluable. The global economic value of pollination services via their contribution to global agriculture is estimated to be more than $235 billion annually. Crops such as coffee and cacao depend heavily on pollinators. In the United States alone, insect pollination adds more than $34 billion in value to crops like almonds, apples, and blueberries. Without pollinators, agricultural yields would decline dramatically, leading to food shortages and increased prices. Farmers would face higher costs as they attempt to compensate through often inefficient and expensive artificial pollination methods.

Despite their importance, pollinators are currently facing a conservation crisis. Assessments as recent as 2025 reveal that more than 22% of native North American pollinators are at an elevated risk of extinction. The threats are multifaceted and—like many conservation challenges—often synergistic:

- **Habitat Loss and Fragmentation**: Urbanization and industrial agriculture replace native meadows and prairies with manicured lawns and monocultures, stripping away food and nesting sites.
- **Pesticide Exposure**: The use of broad-spectrum insecticides and herbicides can be directly lethal to pollinators or impair their navigation and immune systems.

- **Climate Change**: Rising temperatures disrupt the delicate phenological sync between when flowers bloom and when pollinators emerge to feed.

Pollinator conservation is deeply connected to broader conservation goals. Healthy pollinator populations sustain plant diversity, which in turn supports wildlife and stabilizes ecosystems. Conversely, the conservation of natural habitats benefits pollinators by providing them with food and shelter. This interdependence highlights the need for integrated conservation strategies that consider the entire ecological network. Strategic actions now being emphasized include:

- **Habitat Restoration**: Planting native flowering species, trees, and shrubs, creating pollinator-friendly gardens, and establishing habitat corridors can provide essential resources. Establishing multiple vertical layers, including trees, thicket-forming shrubs, and creeping groundcovers, provides varied shelter and nesting options.
- **Integrated Pest Management**: Reducing reliance on harmful chemicals by using biological controls and targeted applications helps minimize chemical exposure and create safer habitats for pollinators.
- **Policy and Public Engagement**: Individuals can contribute by planting pollinator-friendly plants, avoiding harmful chemicals, and advocating for policies that protect pollinator habitats. Governments and organizations can invest in research, monitoring, and conservation programs to address pollinator declines effectively.

Pollinators are critical biological engines that sustain both natural ecosystems and human civilization. Their importance is measured across food security, economic value, and ecological health. As bioindicators of environmental health, their decline often signals broader ecological problems, such as habitat degradation and pollution. Protecting pollinators, therefore, contributes to the resilience of ecosystems and the services they provide to humanity.

Pollinators are vital to life on Earth. They support food production, maintain biodiversity, and provide ecosystem stability. Yet, they face unprecedented threats that demand urgent action. Conservation efforts aimed at protecting pollinators will yield benefits far beyond their survival by safeguarding ecosystems, economies, and human well-being. By recognizing their importance and committing to their protection, we can take a crucial step toward a sustainable future.

David Dimitrie is the Director of Conservation at the Detroit Zoological Society, where he oversees the conservation activities at the Detroit Zoo and Belle Isle Nature Center, as well as field conservation programs and partnerships throughout Michigan and around the world. David holds a bachelor's degree in Zoology from Michigan State University, as well as a master's degree in Zoology from Southern Illinois University and a PhD in Biology from Case Western Reserve University. Driven by a lifelong passion to travel to wild places and experience the natural world, he finds daily inspiration in exploring and protecting the beauty of our planet.

ABOUT THE JURORS

Jennifer Swope is the David and Roberta Logie Associate Curator of Textiles and Fashion Arts at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. A recipient of a Lois F. McNeil Fellowship, she attended the Winterthur Program in American Culture, receiving a master's degree in American Material Culture from the University of Delaware. Swope co-authored and curated *Quilts and Color: The Pilgrim/Roy Collection*, a catalog and exhibition that opened at the MFA Boston in 2014. She also co-authored and curated *Fabric of a Nation: American Quilt Stories*, a catalog and exhibition that opened at the MFA Boston in 2021.

Ashley Ciricola is the Curator of Fine and Performing Arts for the Detroit Zoological Society. She oversees the permanent art collection at the Detroit Zoo, curates exhibits in their permanent and temporary exhibit galleries, and cares for the outdoor sculptures across the 125 acre Zoo. Pollinators is the third SAQA exhibition hosted at the Detroit Zoo. Ashley holds a Master of Arts in Museum Studies from Syracuse University and enjoys nature, reading, and a good cup of tea.

Frank Klein is a renowned Texas rancher, photographer, and conservationist. He purchased his first art quilt in 2014 when he visited the SAQA *Celebrating Silver* exhibition at the International Quilt Festival in Houston. Since then, his collection of art quilts has grown to over 200 pieces. His love of family, photography, and nature has developed a collection of fine art quilts that inspires the nature lover in all of us.

JUROR ESSAY

Pollinators—A Revery
By Jennifer Swope

The Studio Art Quilt Associates' *Pollinators* exhibition has invited quilt artists to consider a subject that has engaged poets, philosophers, and scientists for over two millennia. In the early 1860s, Emily Dickinson explored the inspiring and unceasing work of pollinators in "To Make a Prairie".

> To make a prairie it takes a clover and one bee,
> One clover, and a bee,
> And revery.
> The revery alone will do
> If bees are few.

Dickinson wrote these lines when scientific understanding of pollination and its genetic implications was emerging. Known in her lifetime as an exceptional gardener, Dickinson's keen observation of pollinators and plants in an ever-changing landscape is shared by the quilt artists represented in this exhibition.

Gardening with native plants inspired Victoria Rowe Berry's *Wonderful Whirled of Butterflies and Bees*, a densely layered spiral composition that explores the structure of flowering plants and insect metamorphosis. *Wonderful Whirled of Butterflies and Bees* was created on the 50th anniversary of the artist's home state of Missouri making the honeybee its official insect, marking the growing awareness of the ecological significance of these industrious insects. Gabriele DiTota's *Godly Food and Pesky Midges* reminds chocophiles that humble midges flying among a forest of printed and dyed cocoa trees are crucial to cultivating the beans that are the staple of their obsession. The title refers to the tree's scientific name, Theobroma cacao, which translates to "food of the gods."

Non-insect pollinators play important roles in their own ecosystems. In *Unseen Heroes of the Sonoran*, Vicki Conley printed a tessellated composition of lesser long-nose bats and quilted a pattern of saguaro blossoms. Maggie Dillon's *Velvet Gardeners* captures the frenetic movement of mice through the undergrowth in solid cottons and pictorial quilting in a vegetal pattern. In contrasting saturated colors, Christie King Eckardt's *Amidst Crimson and Scarlet* shows the essential role ground-dwelling ring-tailed lemurs play in the biodiversity of the forest floors of Madagascar.

Since advances in microscopes began in the late 16th century, invisible worlds revealed by optical instruments have inspired visual artists. In preparation to create *Bombus auricomus* (Black and Gold Bumble Bee), Kathy DeVries observed her subject under magnification, gaining an appreciation for the furry texture of its black and gold segmented body and translucent wings. The artist manipulated embroidery stitches to capture the hairs of the bumble bee that hold pollen, and experimented with dyeing techniques to suggest a leg visible behind a wing,

The capacity to take close-up photographs of winged insects allowed other artists in the exhibition to create study images that inspired their compositions. Caryl Bryer Fallert-Gentry's *Lepidopteran #4* demonstrates how a wide array of materials and techniques can be used to create chromatic and surface variation in this dynamic rendering of a single butterfly in a garden habitat. Meiko Washio's shaped and densely quilted and embroidered rendering of a single pollen grain gives *Wind Carrier* a sculptural quality while acknowledging atmospheric agents of pollination.

Like Emily Dickinson's poem "To Make a Prairie", several quilts in the exhibition are landscapes that suggest the humming presence of pollinators. Julie M. Garcia's depiction of bee boxes tucked within the rolling farm fields of Manitoba is titled *A Match Made in Heaven*. The artist appliquéd a range of fabrics from synthetics to lace, some painted with dyes and others embroidered with a range of stitches, to convey the shifting colors and textures of the Great Plains in summer. The triptych composition of Deborah Boschert's *Breezes, Birds, and Bugs* transitions from foreground to distant horizon with a combination of printed patterns and hand embroidery that lends it a graphic quality.

Ranging from pollinator and plant to the landscape they inhabit and create, the subjects of the artwork in SAQA's *Pollinators* exhibition invite closer consideration, even revery, of the natural world. Dickinson's poem reminds the reader that the dream or recollection of "when bees are few" is sustaining. The artists in SAQA's *Pollinators* exhibition rendered their visions and concepts in cloth, showing the communicative power of the many textile materials and techniques used by quilters today around the globe.



Sunday Afternoon in the Garden by Diane Kearney



Godly Food an Pesky Midges by Gabriele DiTota



Amidst Crimson and Scarlet by Christie King Eckardt

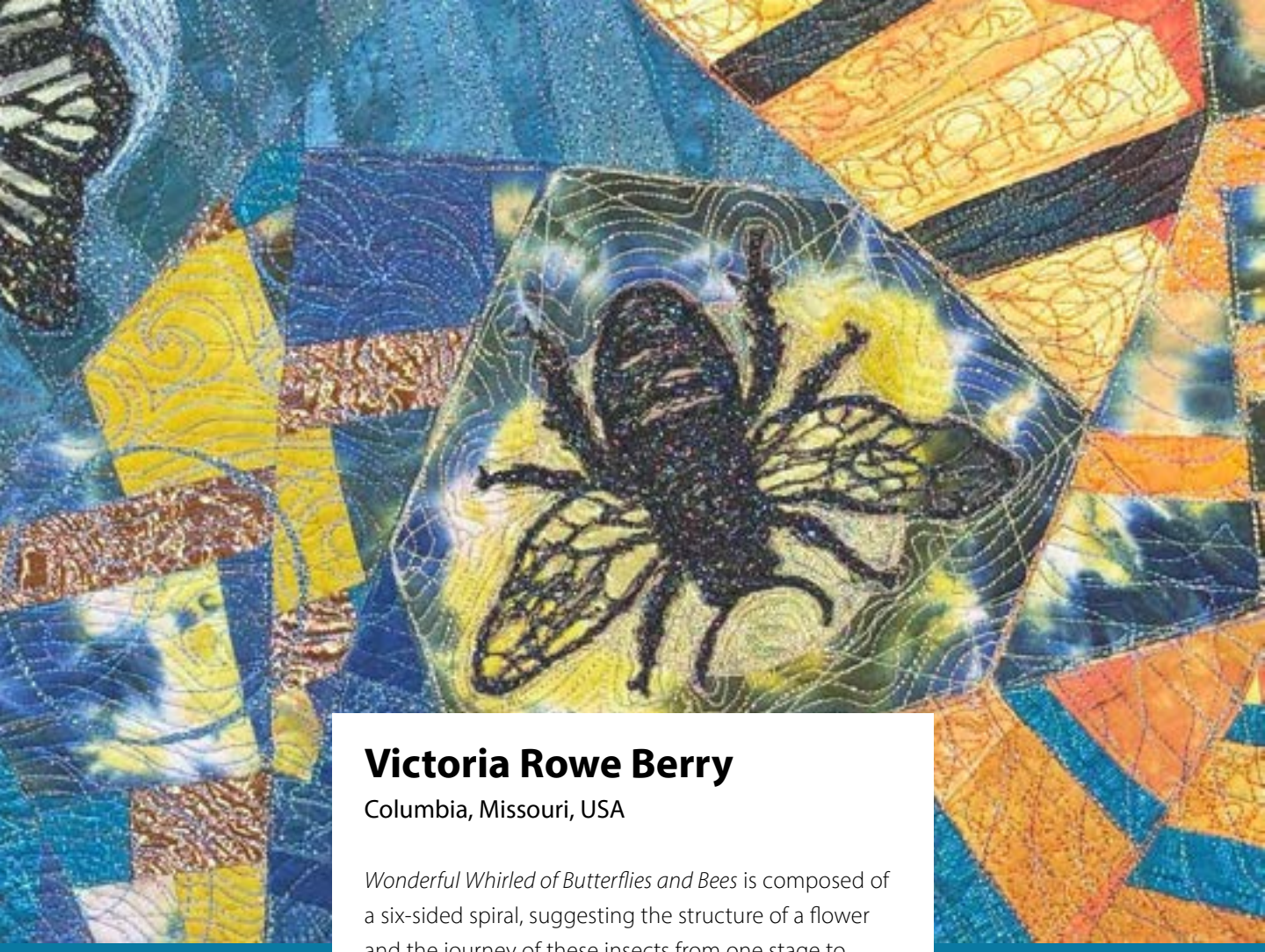
THE ARTISTS



Wind Carrier by Mieko Washio



Pollinating Paradise by Claire Passmore



Victoria Rowe Berry

Columbia, Missouri, USA

Wonderful Whirled of Butterflies and Bees is composed of a six-sided spiral, suggesting the structure of a flower and the journey of these insects from one stage to another. The piece was inspired by the garden my husband and I created during the pandemic to support native plants and pollinators, as well as to help us be outdoors during the shutdown. We tracked monarchs and other insects and captured many photographs. The improvisationally pieced stripes suggest the caterpillar stage of the monarch butterfly. The empty circles symbolize the reduction in the populations of these vital pollinators and the threat to their habitat.

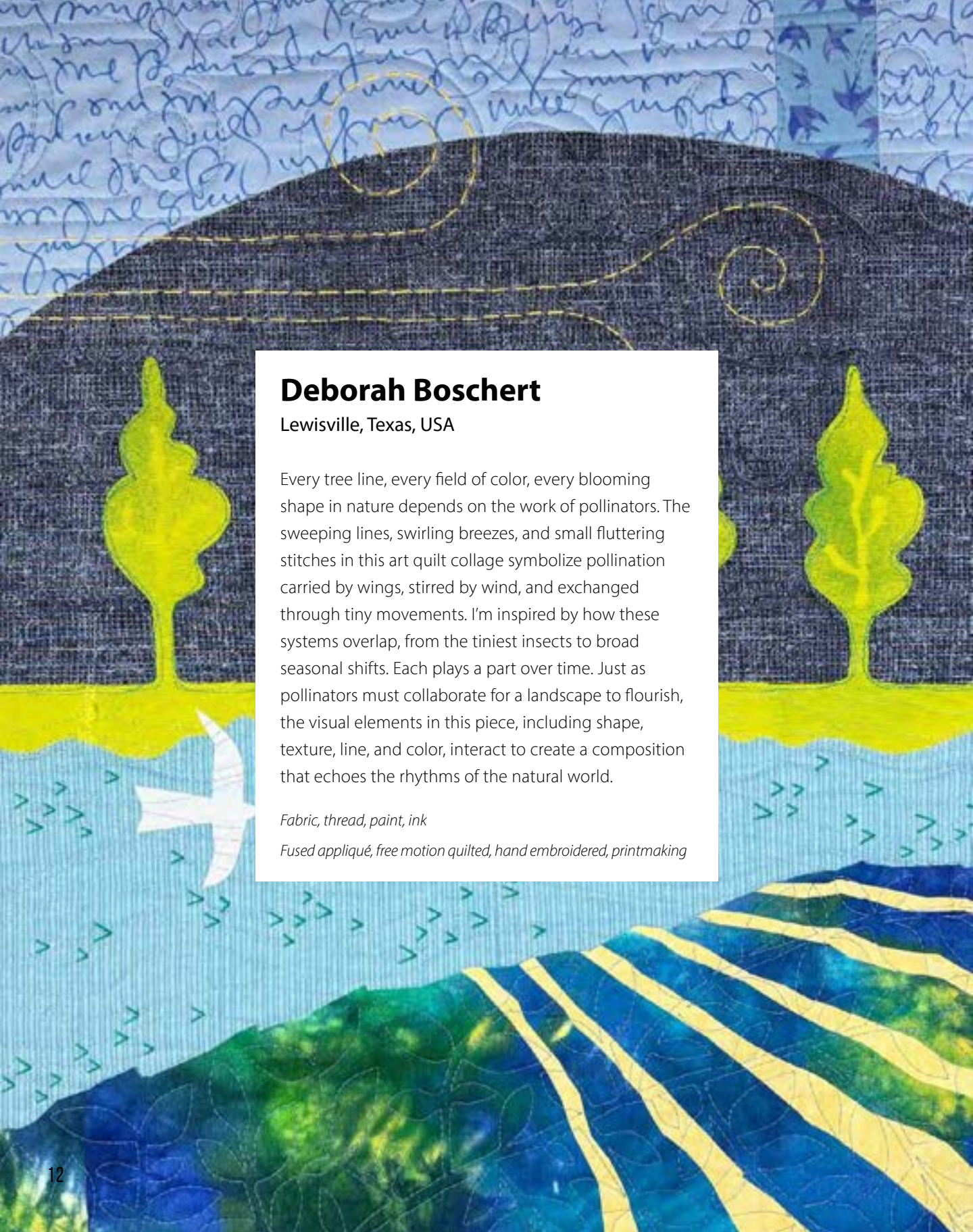
Mercerized cotton, organza, Mistyfuse, fabric paint, free motion lace and organza appliqués, metallic, rayon, and polyester threads

Hand dyed, free motion quilted



Wonderful Whirled of Butterflies and Bees

55 x 55 inches | 140 x 140 cm | 2025



Deborah Boschert

Lewisville, Texas, USA

Every tree line, every field of color, every blooming shape in nature depends on the work of pollinators. The sweeping lines, swirling breezes, and small fluttering stitches in this art quilt collage symbolize pollination carried by wings, stirred by wind, and exchanged through tiny movements. I'm inspired by how these systems overlap, from the tiniest insects to broad seasonal shifts. Each plays a part over time. Just as pollinators must collaborate for a landscape to flourish, the visual elements in this piece, including shape, texture, line, and color, interact to create a composition that echoes the rhythms of the natural world.

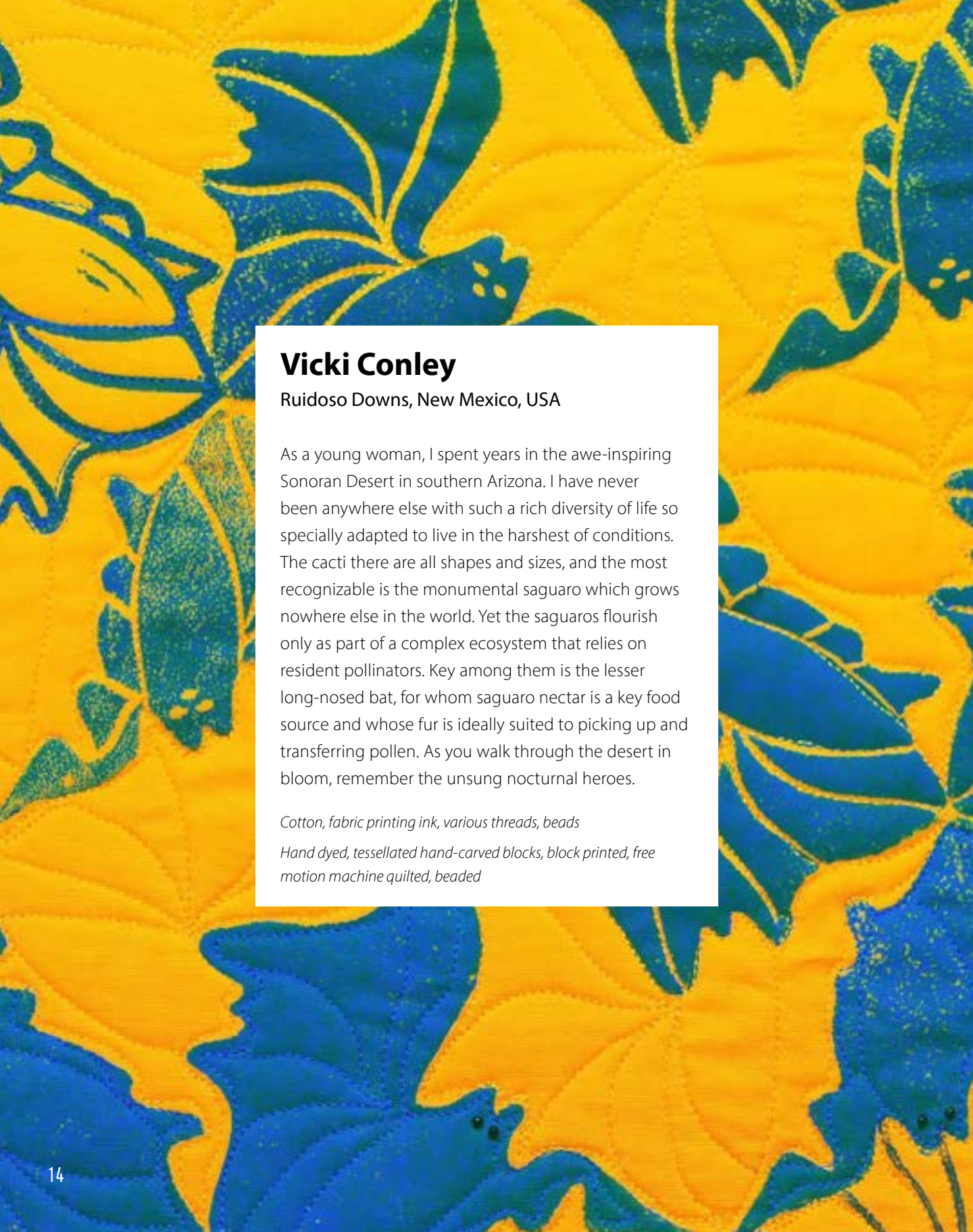
Fabric, thread, paint, ink

Fused appliqué, free motion quilted, hand embroidered, printmaking



Breezes, Birds, and Bugs

41 x 23 inches | 104 x 58 cm | 2025



Vicki Conley

Ruidoso Downs, New Mexico, USA

As a young woman, I spent years in the awe-inspiring Sonoran Desert in southern Arizona. I have never been anywhere else with such a rich diversity of life so specially adapted to live in the harshest of conditions. The cacti there are all shapes and sizes, and the most recognizable is the monumental saguaro which grows nowhere else in the world. Yet the saguaros flourish only as part of a complex ecosystem that relies on resident pollinators. Key among them is the lesser long-nosed bat, for whom saguaro nectar is a key food source and whose fur is ideally suited to picking up and transferring pollen. As you walk through the desert in bloom, remember the unsung nocturnal heroes.

Cotton, fabric printing ink, various threads, beads

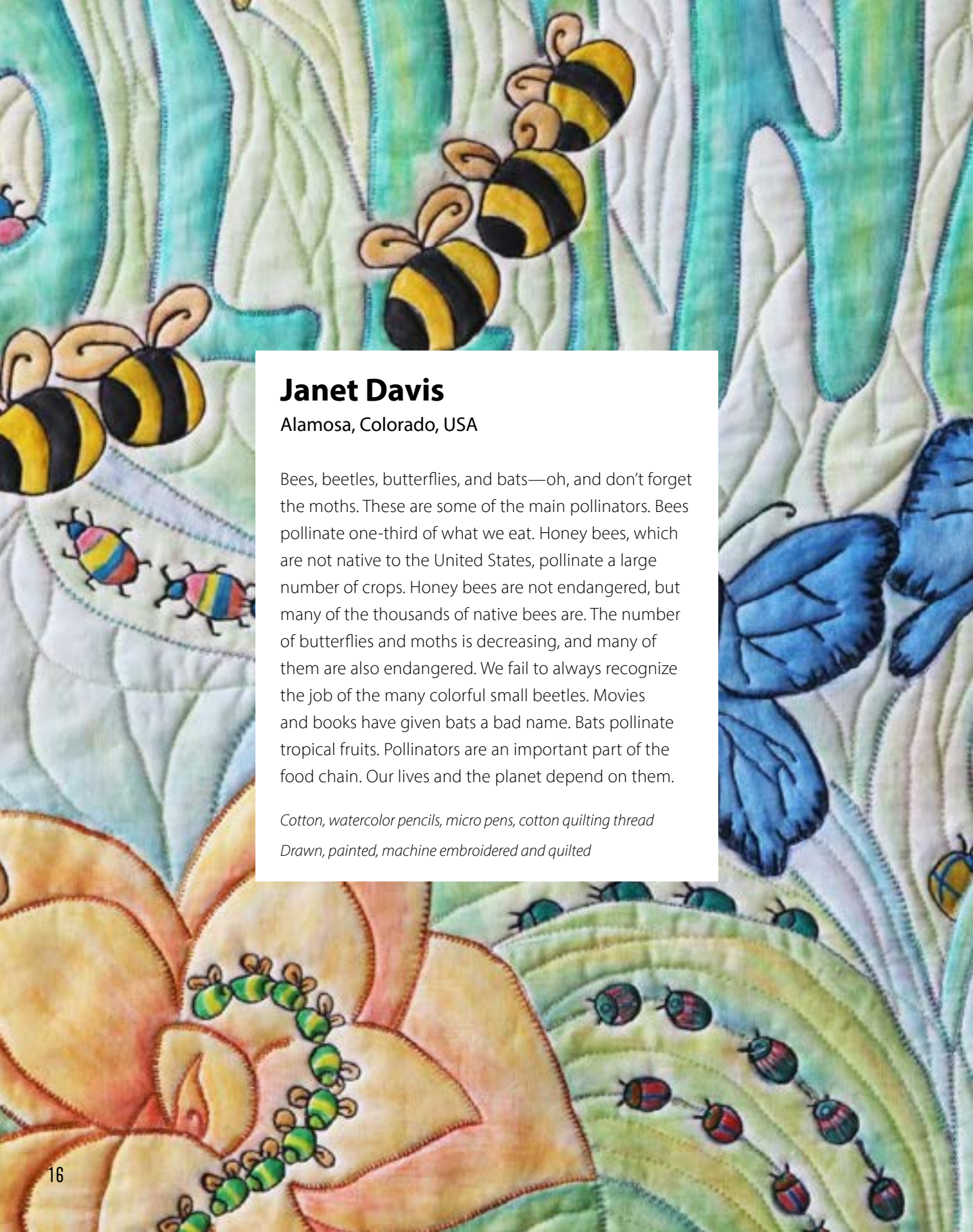
Hand dyed, tessellated hand-carved blocks, block printed, free motion machine quilted, beaded



Unseen Hereos of the Sonoran Desert

42 x 42 inches | 107 x 107 cm | 2025

Photo by Doug Conley



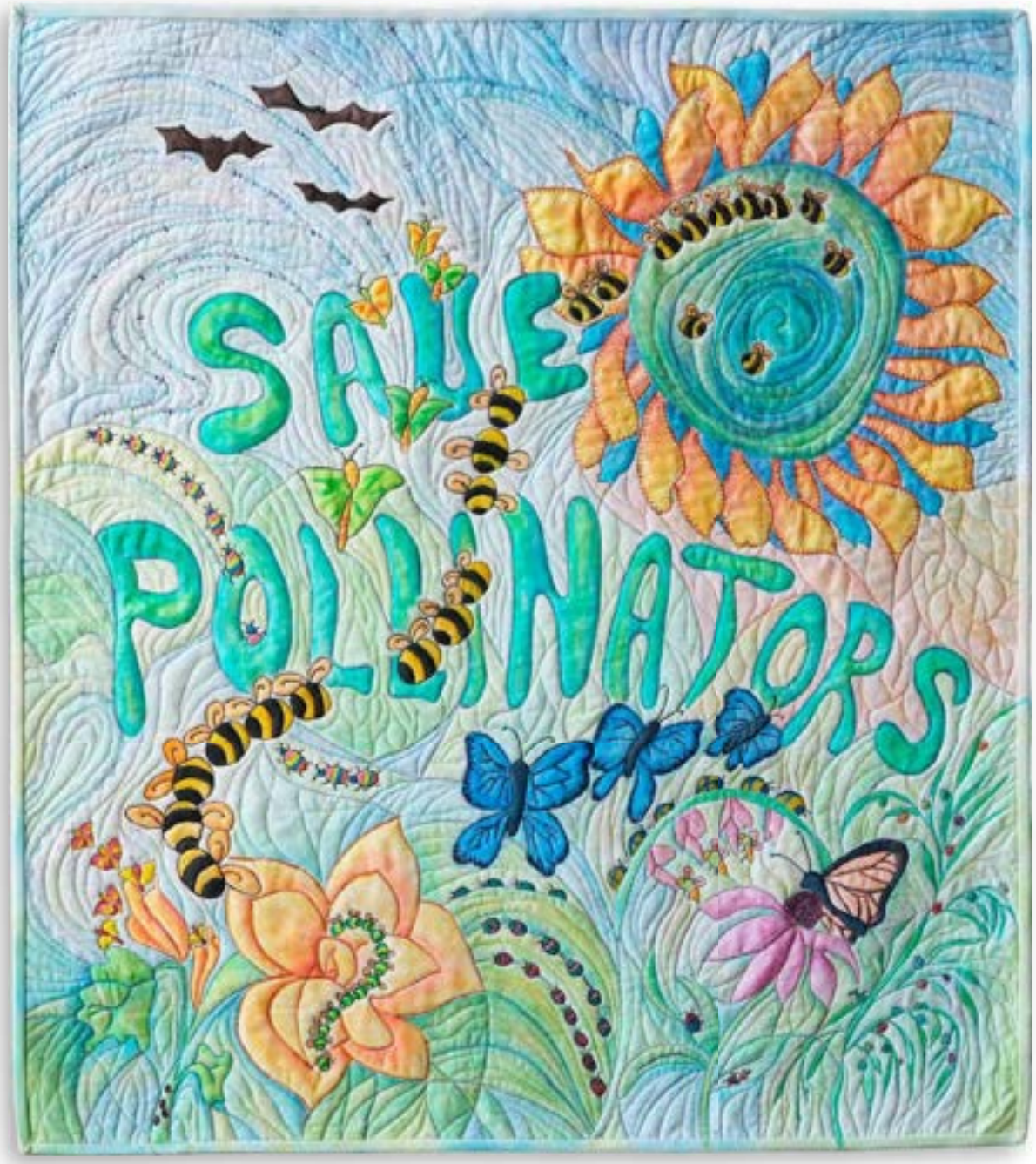
Janet Davis

Alamosa, Colorado, USA

Bees, beetles, butterflies, and bats—oh, and don't forget the moths. These are some of the main pollinators. Bees pollinate one-third of what we eat. Honey bees, which are not native to the United States, pollinate a large number of crops. Honey bees are not endangered, but many of the thousands of native bees are. The number of butterflies and moths is decreasing, and many of them are also endangered. We fail to always recognize the job of the many colorful small beetles. Movies and books have given bats a bad name. Bats pollinate tropical fruits. Pollinators are an important part of the food chain. Our lives and the planet depend on them.

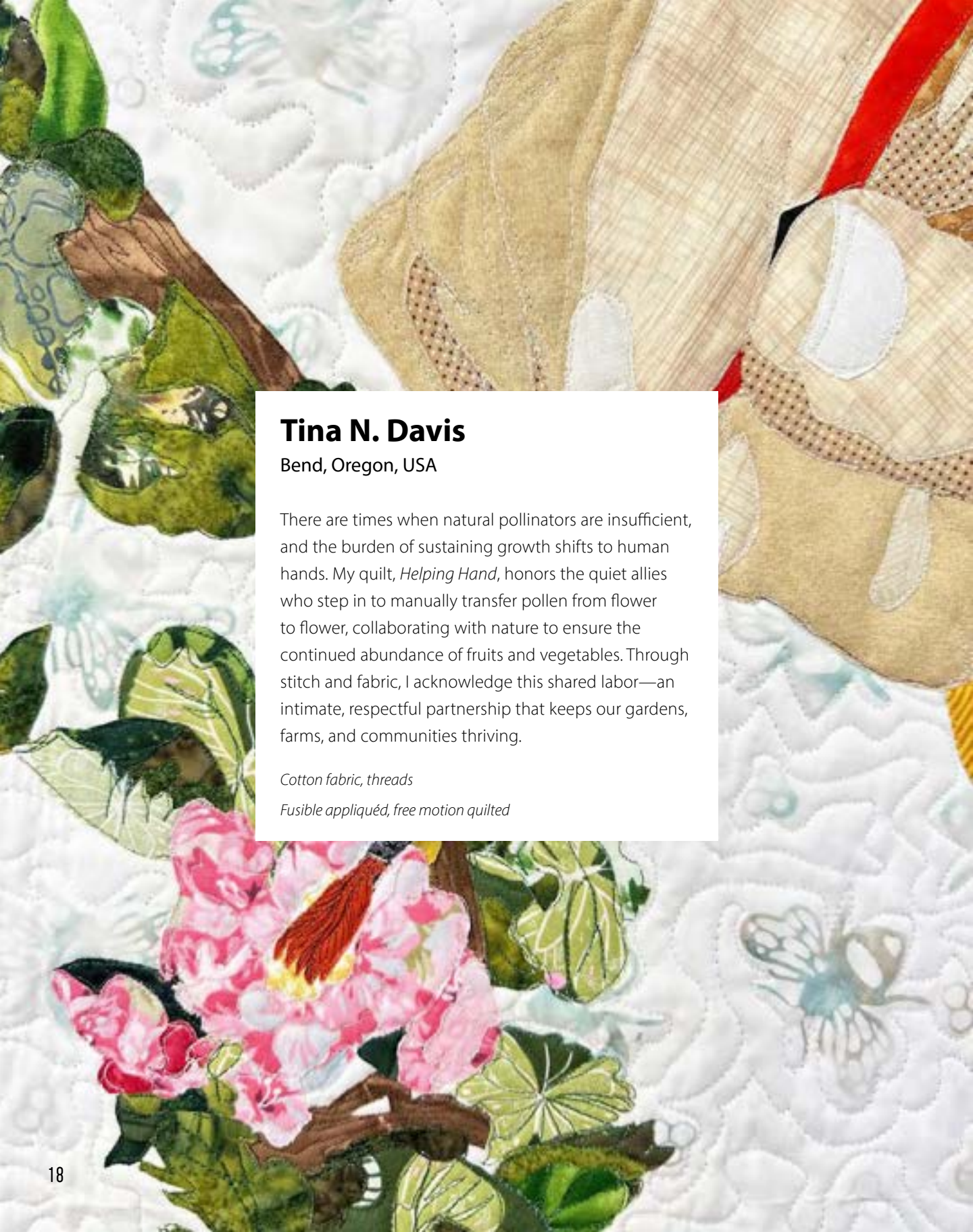
Cotton, watercolor pencils, micro pens, cotton quilting thread

Drawn, painted, machine embroidered and quilted



Save the Pollinators

36 x 32 inches | 91 x 81 cm | 2025



Tina N. Davis

Bend, Oregon, USA

There are times when natural pollinators are insufficient, and the burden of sustaining growth shifts to human hands. My quilt, *Helping Hand*, honors the quiet allies who step in to manually transfer pollen from flower to flower, collaborating with nature to ensure the continued abundance of fruits and vegetables. Through stitch and fabric, I acknowledge this shared labor—an intimate, respectful partnership that keeps our gardens, farms, and communities thriving.

Cotton fabric, threads

Fusible appliquéd, free motion quilted



Helping Hand

19 x 24 inches | 48 x 61 cm | 2024



Kathy DeVries

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA

One of the largest bumble bee species, Black and Gold, is very common in the Great Lakes ecosystem. Finding and drawing this *Bombus auricomus* ("with golden hair") female body seen through a microscope set me on a journey, marrying my love of natural science illustration and quilting. Her large body has wonderfully distinct black and yellow segments, allowing me to experiment with pattern making and sewing techniques. It was a great challenge and pleasure to discover various values and thread techniques to solve for the furry body and translucent wings. I created the hexagon form often associated with bees, though the bumble bee uses many tubular plants to call home.

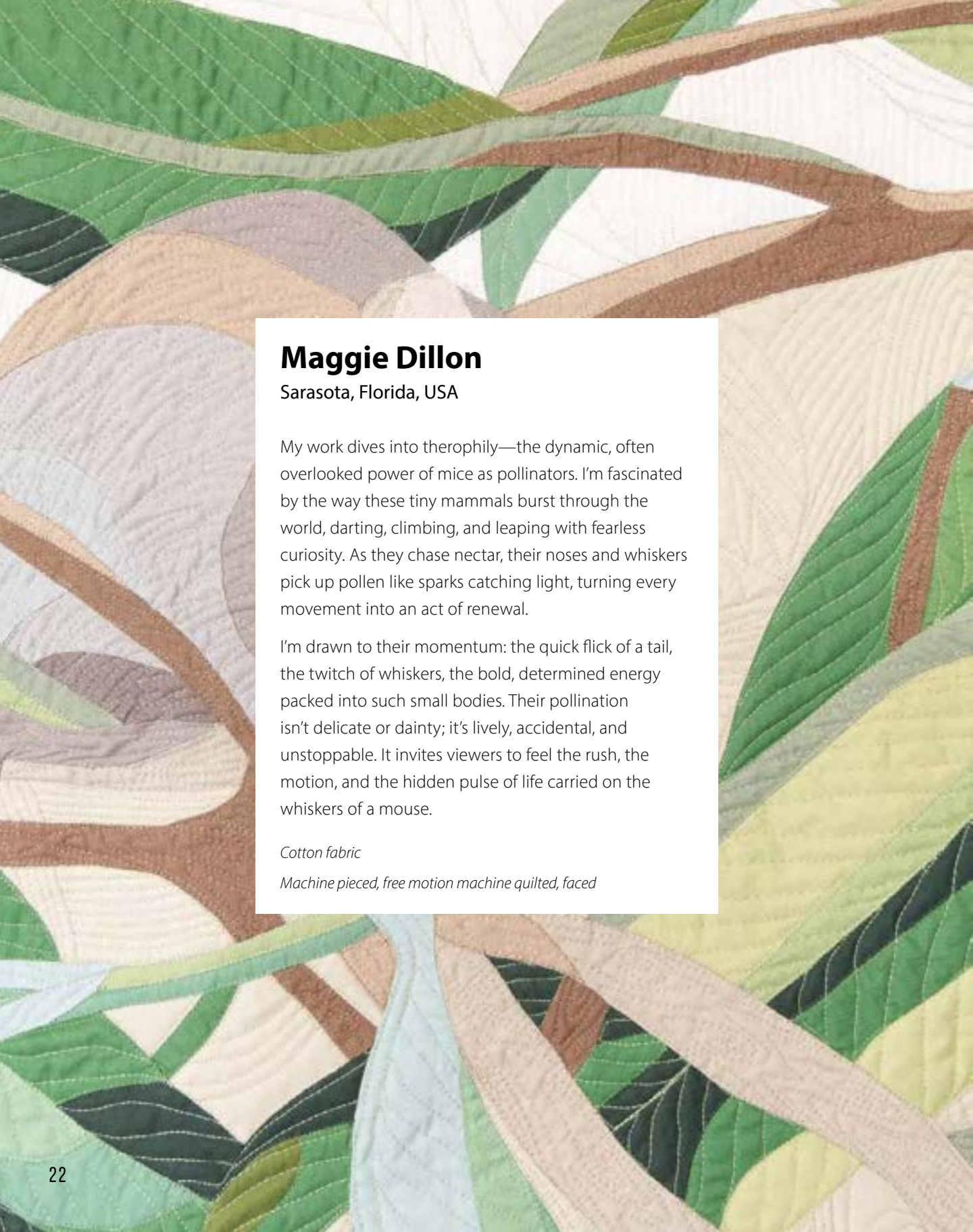
Cotton fabric, cotton voile, coffee dye, thread, stabilizers

Drawn, painted, machine embroidered, stitched, machine quilted



***Bombus auricomus* (Black and Gold Bumble Bee)**

20 x 20 inches | 51 x 51 cm | 2024



Maggie Dillon

Sarasota, Florida, USA

My work dives into therophily—the dynamic, often overlooked power of mice as pollinators. I'm fascinated by the way these tiny mammals burst through the world, darting, climbing, and leaping with fearless curiosity. As they chase nectar, their noses and whiskers pick up pollen like sparks catching light, turning every movement into an act of renewal.

I'm drawn to their momentum: the quick flick of a tail, the twitch of whiskers, the bold, determined energy packed into such small bodies. Their pollination isn't delicate or dainty; it's lively, accidental, and unstoppable. It invites viewers to feel the rush, the motion, and the hidden pulse of life carried on the whiskers of a mouse.

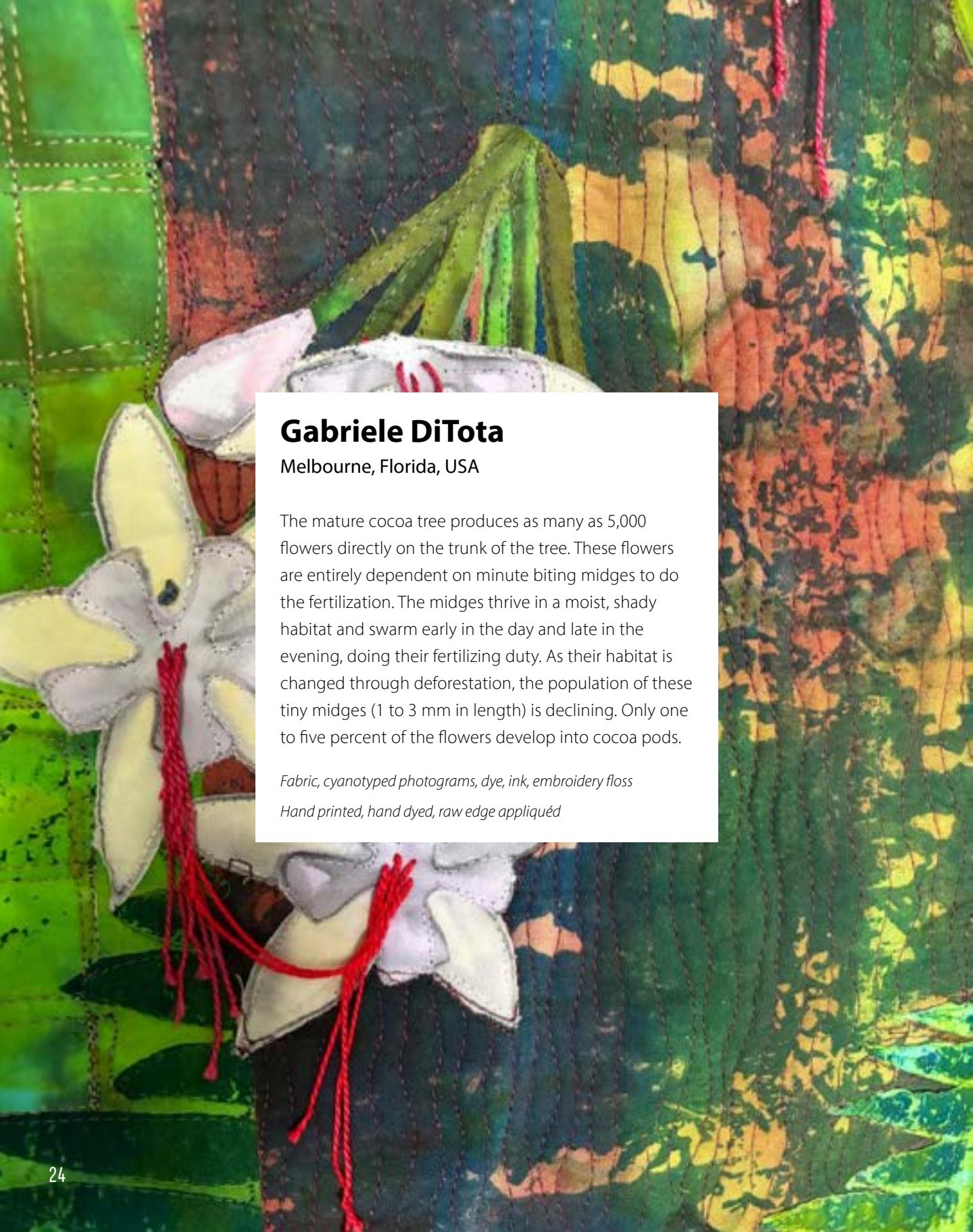
Cotton fabric

Machine pieced, free motion machine quilted, faced



Velvet Gardeners

42 x 53 inches | 107 x 135 cm | 2025



Gabriele DiTota

Melbourne, Florida, USA

The mature cocoa tree produces as many as 5,000 flowers directly on the trunk of the tree. These flowers are entirely dependent on minute biting midges to do the fertilization. The midges thrive in a moist, shady habitat and swarm early in the day and late in the evening, doing their fertilizing duty. As their habitat is changed through deforestation, the population of these tiny midges (1 to 3 mm in length) is declining. Only one to five percent of the flowers develop into cocoa pods.

Fabric, cyanotyped photograms, dye, ink, embroidery floss

Hand printed, hand dyed, raw edge appliquéd



Godly Food and Pesky Midges

42 x 35 inches | 107 x 89 cm | 2025



Christie King Eckardt

Doha, Qatar

In the forest, a ring-tailed lemur moves in search of a delicious meal—an unexpected and unsung steward of Madagascar's biodiversity. Unlike her canopy-dwelling kin, she travels on the ground extensively, inhabiting both lowlands and highlands, extending her influence across a wide geographic range, bringing life with each step. Sustained by fruits and flowers, her lush fur gathers golden pollen dust—each meal an ecological transference of life. Her very movements sustain the delicate balance of Madagascar's fragile ecosystem, a living thread in the island's vast tapestry, performing the unseen art of pollination.

Batiks, cotton fabric, fabric marker

Raw edge fusible appliquéd, machine quilted



Amidst Crimson and Scarlet

46 x 23 inches | 117 x 58 cm | 2025



Caryl Bryer Fallert-Gentry

Port Townsend, Washington, USA

The design for this quilt began with a photograph I took at a butterfly garden in Victoria, British Columbia. I loved the graphic quality of the butterfly in black, white, and red against the verdant background of vegetation. Most of the fabrics are from my *Gradations* collection for Benartex. The background fabric was hand painted with dye. Additional shading was added with pencil, marker, and paint sticks. The quilting added even more shading to the flower and the wings. The painted background fabric was quilted with random leaf shapes in light chartreuse, and the spaces between the leaves were quilted with three values of turquoise in a dense meander pattern to make the leaves stand out.

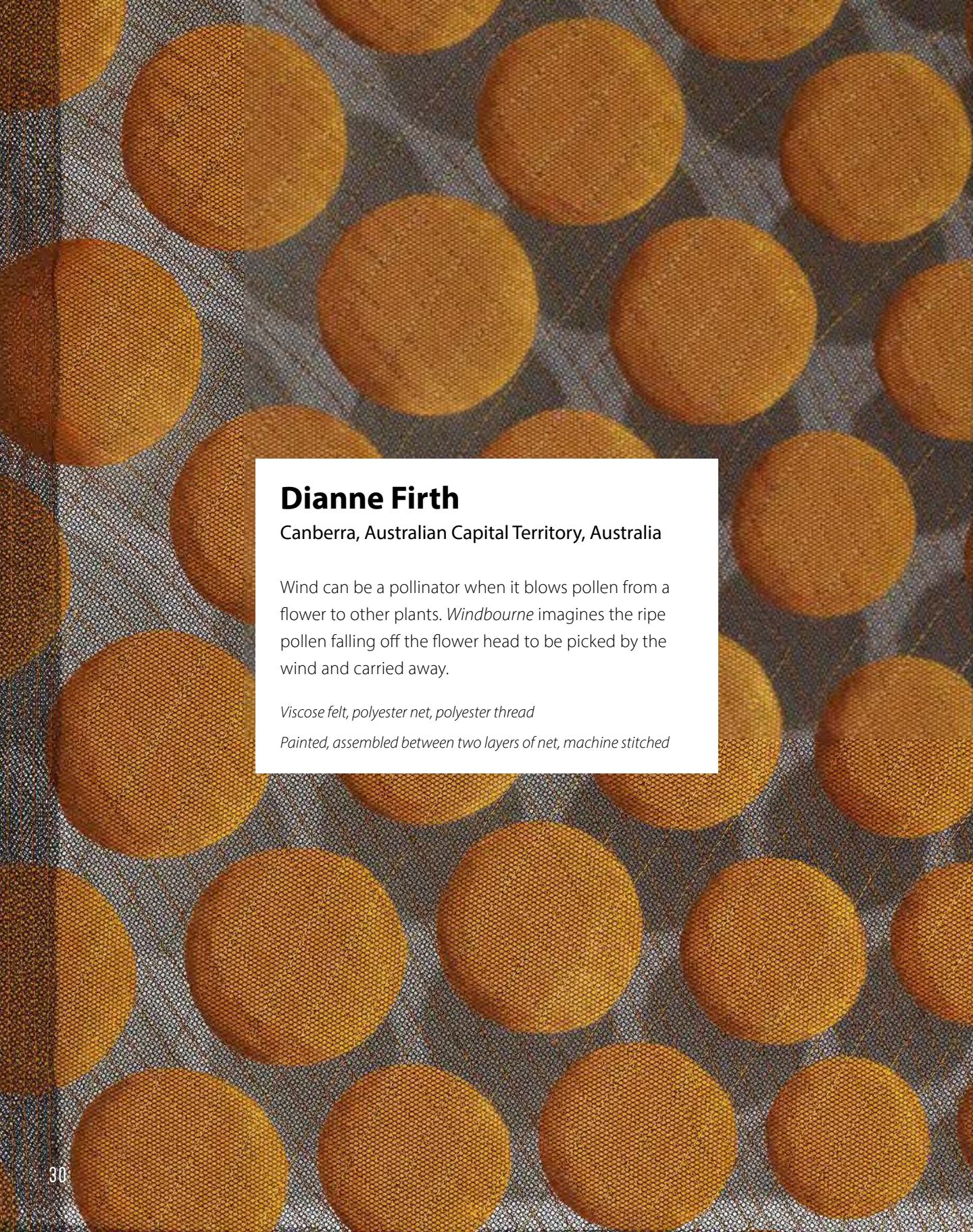
Cotton fabric, polyester and acrylic thread, pencil, ink, dye

Dye painted, drawn, machine pieced and appliquéd, machine embroidered, machine quilted



Lepidopteran #4

48 x 32 inches | 122 x 81 cm | 2022



Dianne Firth

Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, Australia

Wind can be a pollinator when it blows pollen from a flower to other plants. *Windbourne* imagines the ripe pollen falling off the flower head to be picked by the wind and carried away.

Viscose felt, polyester net, polyester thread

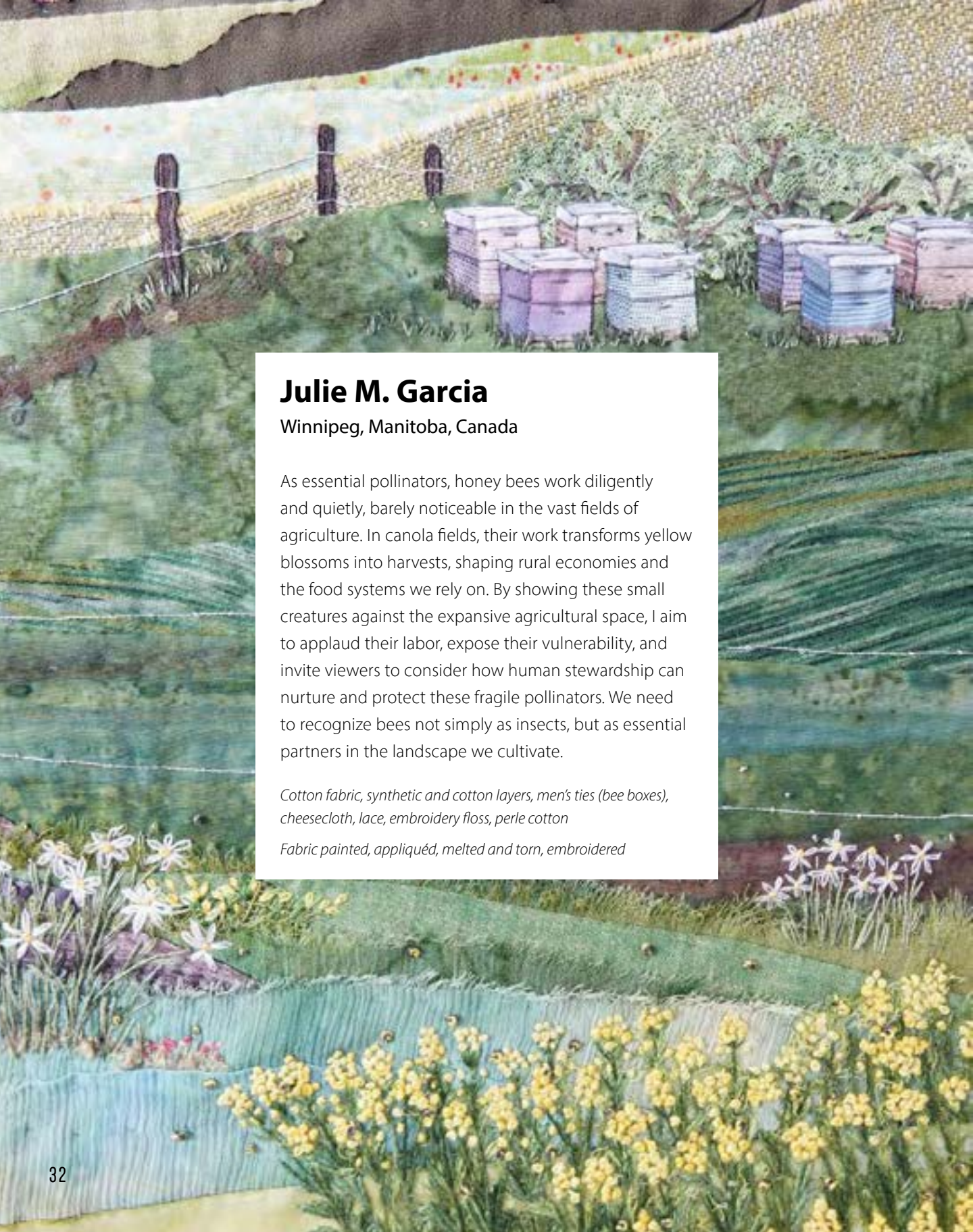
Painted, assembled between two layers of net, machine stitched



Windbourne

53 x 25 inches | 135 x 64 cm | 2025

Photo by Andrew Sikorski



Julie M. Garcia

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

As essential pollinators, honey bees work diligently and quietly, barely noticeable in the vast fields of agriculture. In canola fields, their work transforms yellow blossoms into harvests, shaping rural economies and the food systems we rely on. By showing these small creatures against the expansive agricultural space, I aim to applaud their labor, expose their vulnerability, and invite viewers to consider how human stewardship can nurture and protect these fragile pollinators. We need to recognize bees not simply as insects, but as essential partners in the landscape we cultivate.

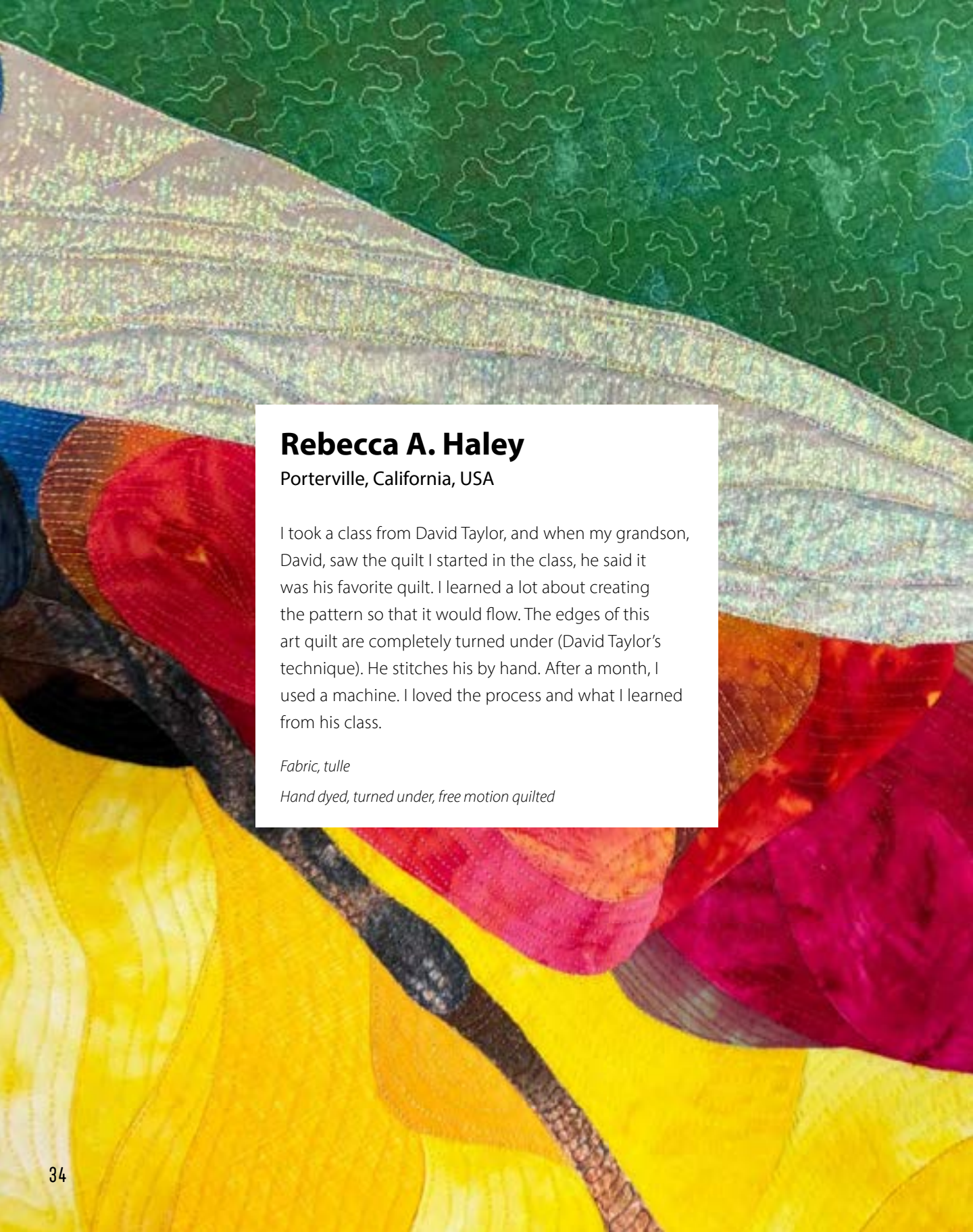
Cotton fabric, synthetic and cotton layers, men's ties (bee boxes), cheesecloth, lace, embroidery floss, perle cotton

Fabric painted, appliquéd, melted and torn, embroidered



A Match Made in Heaven

27 x 27 inches | 69 x 69 cm | 2025



Rebecca A. Haley

Porterville, California, USA

I took a class from David Taylor, and when my grandson, David, saw the quilt I started in the class, he said it was his favorite quilt. I learned a lot about creating the pattern so that it would flow. The edges of this art quilt are completely turned under (David Taylor's technique). He stitches his by hand. After a month, I used a machine. I loved the process and what I learned from his class.

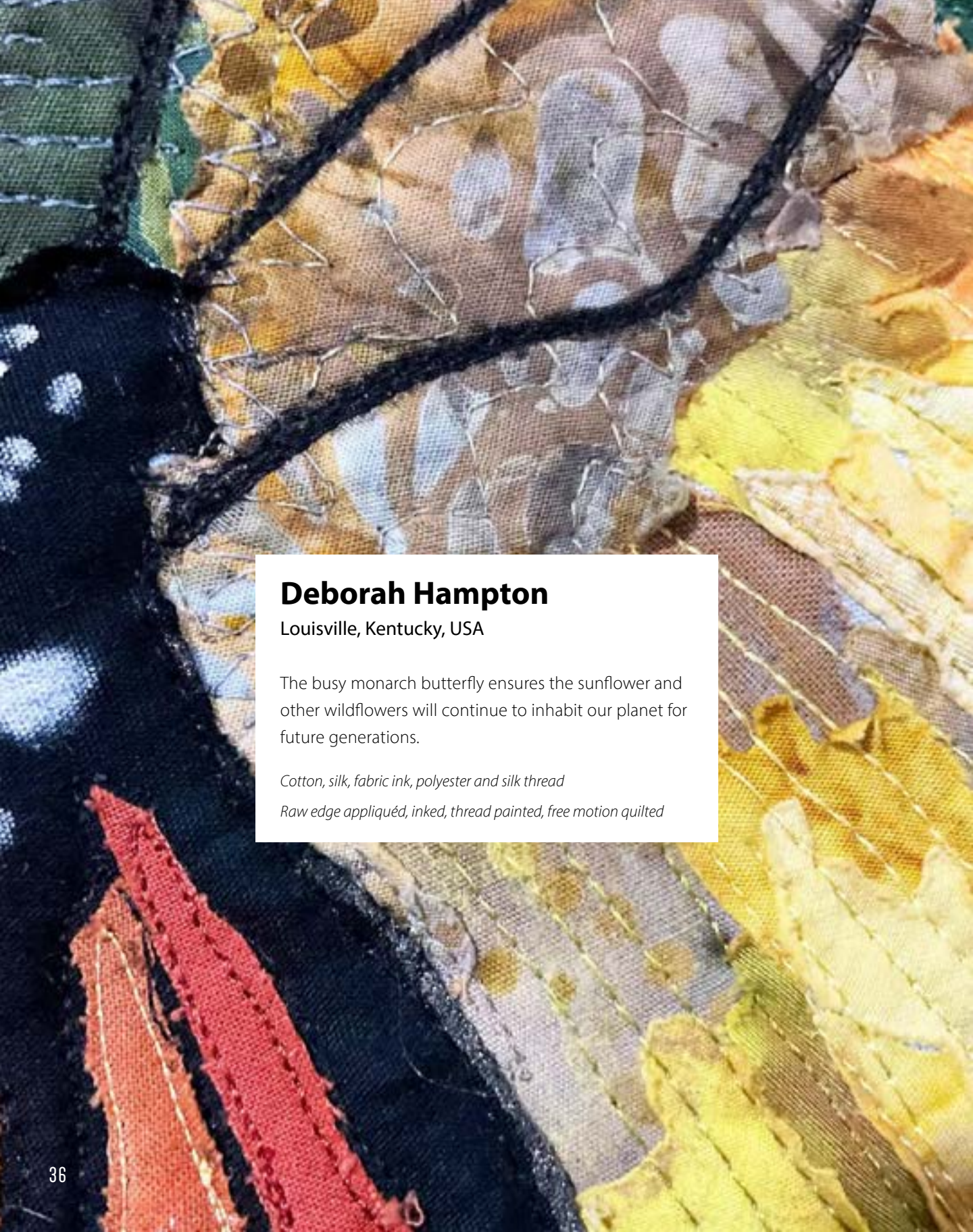
Fabric, tulle

Hand dyed, turned under, free motion quilted



David's Wasp

24 x 37 inches | 61 x 94 cm | 2020



Deborah Hampton

Louisville, Kentucky, USA

The busy monarch butterfly ensures the sunflower and other wildflowers will continue to inhabit our planet for future generations.

Cotton, silk, fabric ink, polyester and silk thread

Raw edge appliquéd, inked, thread painted, free motion quilted



Pollinating the Flowers

26 x 24 inches | 66 x 61 cm | 2025



Laurel Izard

Michigan City, Indiana, USA

Mad Bee is part of a series of quilts called *American Childhood*. All start with mid-century baby blankets created by anonymous hands. The originals were embroidered with cute little anthropomorphized animals over which I hand-embroidered and painted fierce animals. I feel the contrast between the sweet cartoons and wild animals allows us a different focus on the dangers faced by wildlife the world over. Of course, this sense of animal anger is a form of anthropomorphism on my part, but I feel it's not a stretch to think animals would be angry with the way we are treating the world. My hope is that this message helps us look at the wild world in new and more supportive ways.

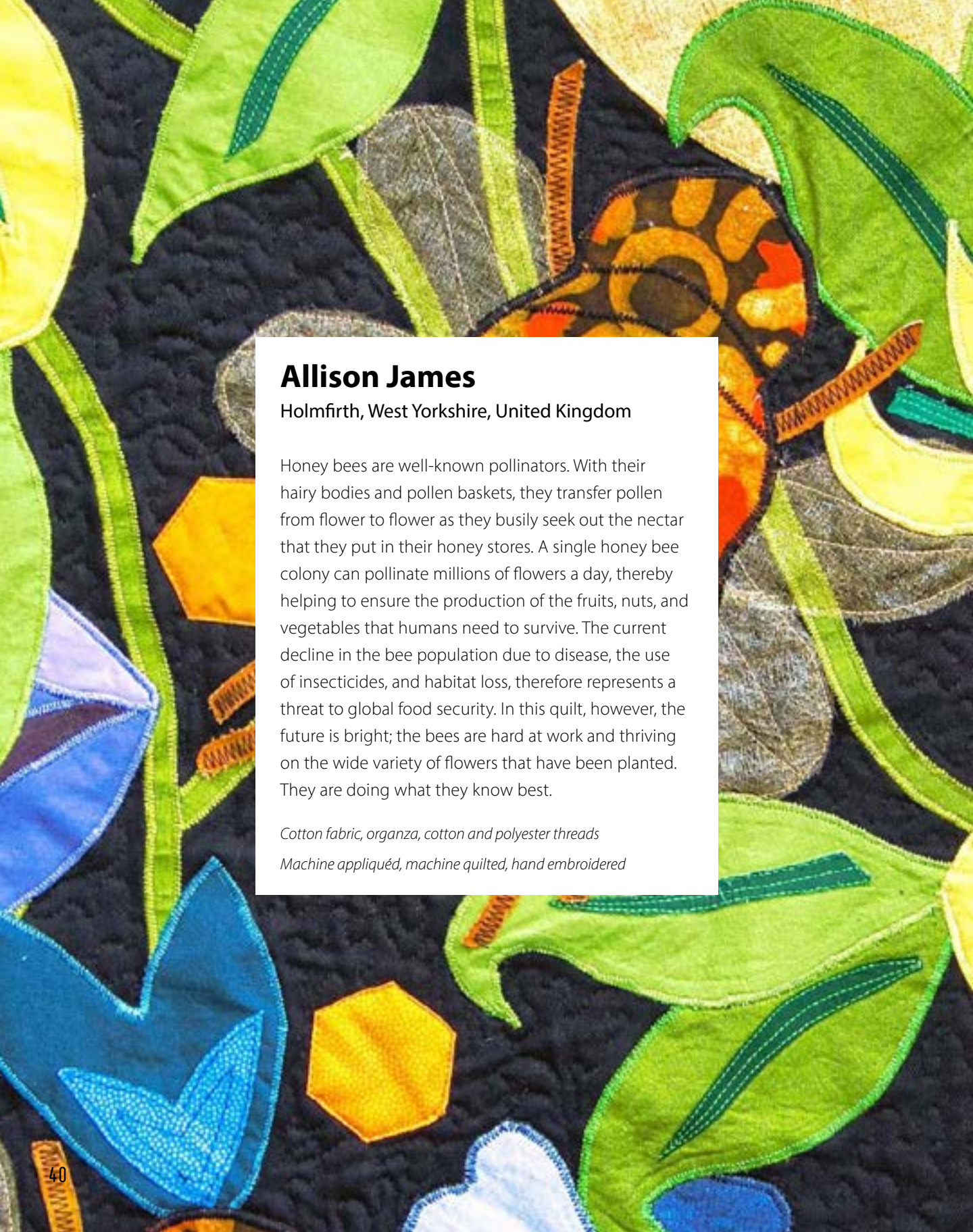
Vintage cotton baby blanket, cotton and polyester thread

Hand embroidered, painted, hand and machine quilted



Mad Bee

42 x 31 inches | 107 x 79 cm | 2025



Allison James

Holmfirth, West Yorkshire, United Kingdom

Honey bees are well-known pollinators. With their hairy bodies and pollen baskets, they transfer pollen from flower to flower as they busily seek out the nectar that they put in their honey stores. A single honey bee colony can pollinate millions of flowers a day, thereby helping to ensure the production of the fruits, nuts, and vegetables that humans need to survive. The current decline in the bee population due to disease, the use of insecticides, and habitat loss, therefore represents a threat to global food security. In this quilt, however, the future is bright; the bees are hard at work and thriving on the wide variety of flowers that have been planted. They are doing what they know best.

Cotton fabric, organza, cotton and polyester threads

Machine appliquéd, machine quilted, hand embroidered



Hard At Work

49 x 38 inches | 124 x 97 cm | 2025

Photo by Adrian James



Margaret Ray James

Indian Trail, North Carolina, USA

Within the sanctuary of tangled blooms and swaying stems, pollinators emerge as quiet sentinels, their presence a living thread within the tapestry of nature.

Fabric, paint, colored pencils, thread, floss

Painted, raw edge appliquéd, drawn, free motion quilted, hand stitched



A Living Thread

37 x 38 inches | 94 x 97 cm | 2025



Diane Kearney

Venice, Florida, USA

Watching a monarch butterfly in the garden is magical. Monarchs love brightly colored zinnias and will sip nectar whenever they can. *Sunday Afternoon in the Garden* is based on a photo I took in my garden one late summer day. My hope is that people will create more butterfly gardens. If you plant them, they will come!

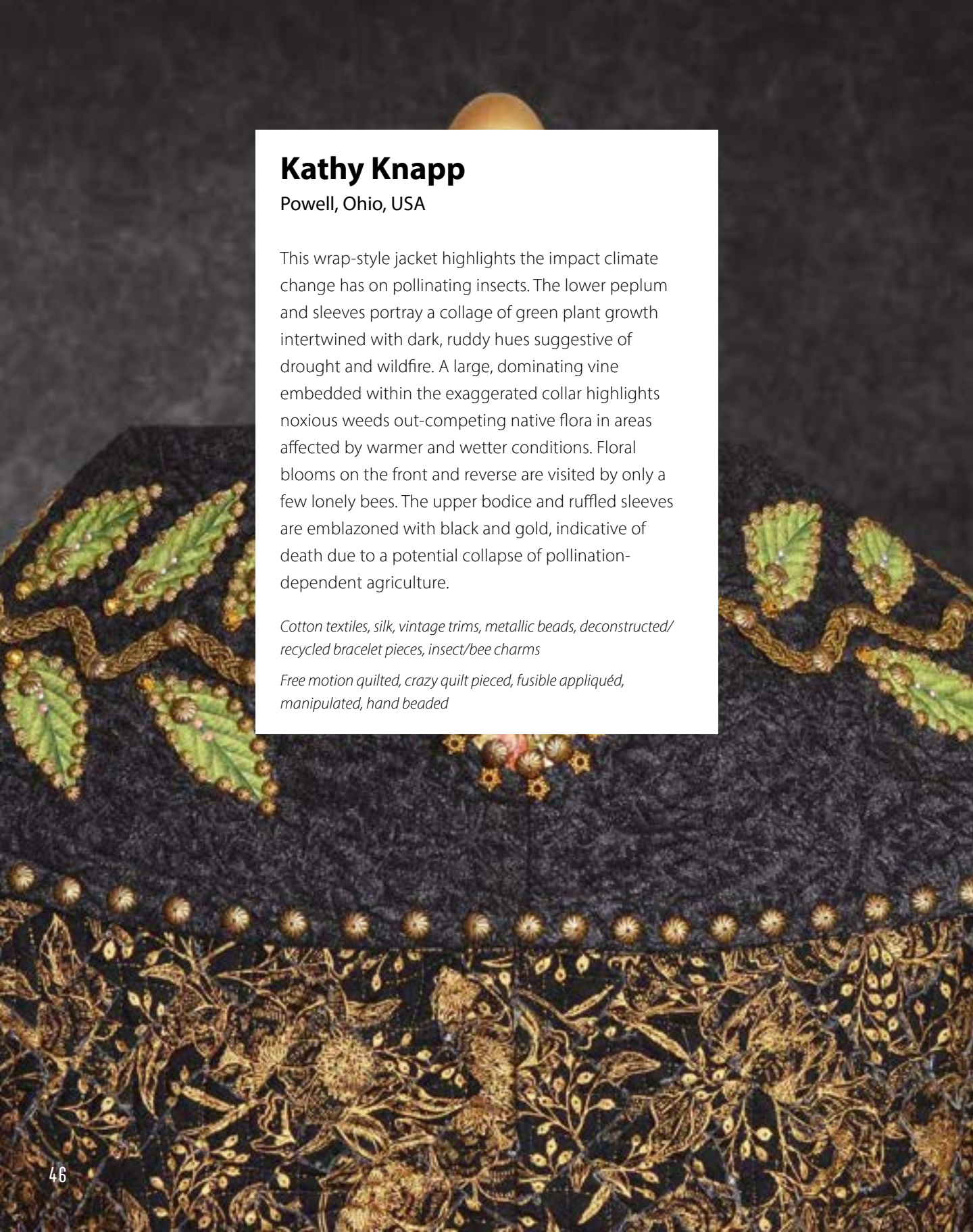
Cotton batik fabric, cotton thread, perle cotton thread

Machine pieced, machine quilted, hand embroidered



Sunday Afternoon in the Garden

19 x 28 inches | 48 x 71 cm | 2024



Kathy Knapp

Powell, Ohio, USA

This wrap-style jacket highlights the impact climate change has on pollinating insects. The lower peplum and sleeves portray a collage of green plant growth intertwined with dark, ruddy hues suggestive of drought and wildfire. A large, dominating vine embedded within the exaggerated collar highlights noxious weeds out-competing native flora in areas affected by warmer and wetter conditions. Floral blooms on the front and reverse are visited by only a few lonely bees. The upper bodice and ruffled sleeves are emblazoned with black and gold, indicative of death due to a potential collapse of pollination-dependent agriculture.

Cotton textiles, silk, vintage trims, metallic beads, deconstructed/ recycled bracelet pieces, insect/bee charms

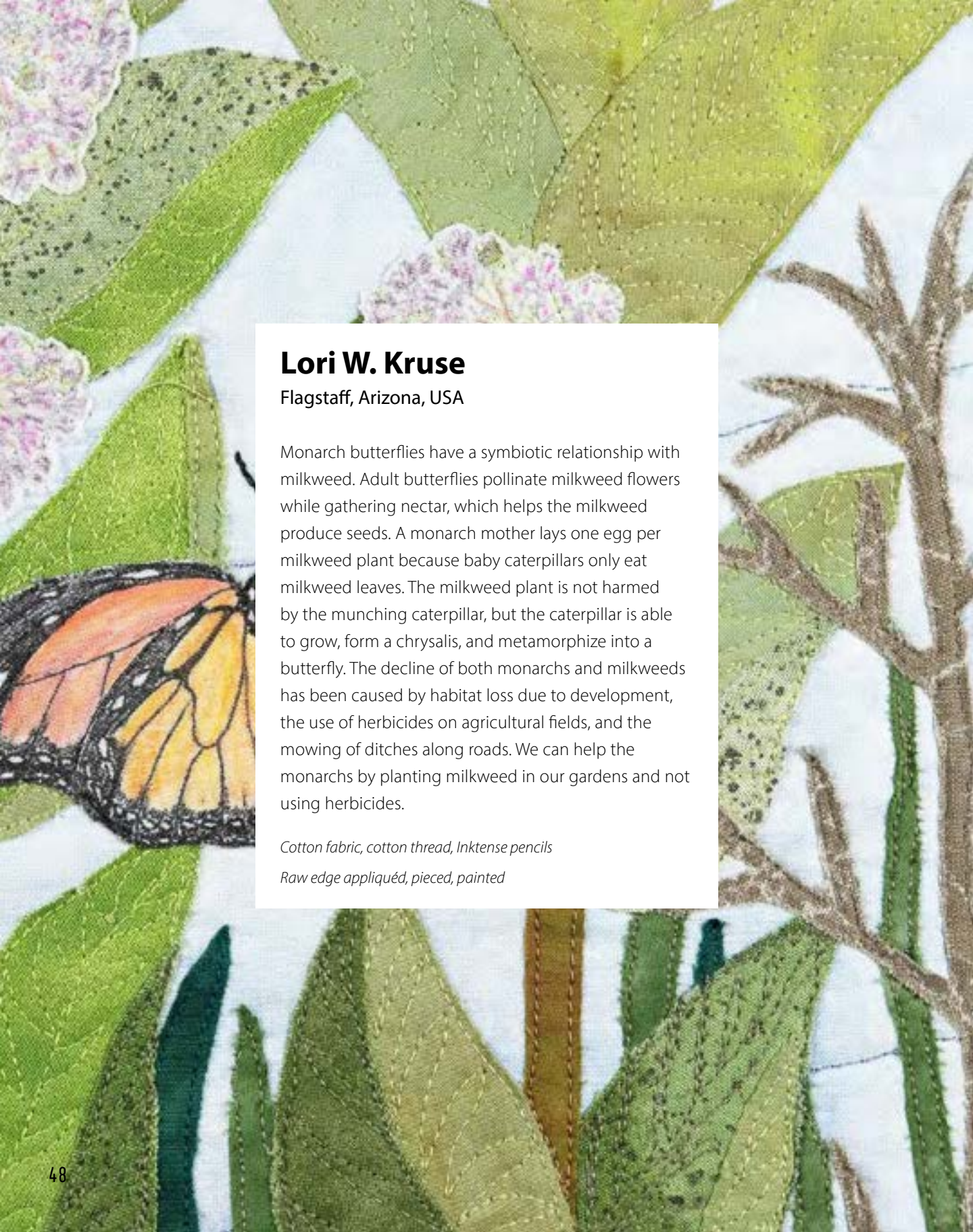
Free motion quilted, crazy quilt pieced, fusible appliquéd, manipulated, hand beaded



Where Have All the Pollinators Gone?

31 x 25 x 14 inches | 79 x 64 x 36 cm | 2017

Photo by William Knapp



Lori W. Kruse

Flagstaff, Arizona, USA

Monarch butterflies have a symbiotic relationship with milkweed. Adult butterflies pollinate milkweed flowers while gathering nectar, which helps the milkweed produce seeds. A monarch mother lays one egg per milkweed plant because baby caterpillars only eat milkweed leaves. The milkweed plant is not harmed by the munching caterpillar, but the caterpillar is able to grow, form a chrysalis, and metamorphize into a butterfly. The decline of both monarchs and milkweeds has been caused by habitat loss due to development, the use of herbicides on agricultural fields, and the mowing of ditches along roads. We can help the monarchs by planting milkweed in our gardens and not using herbicides.

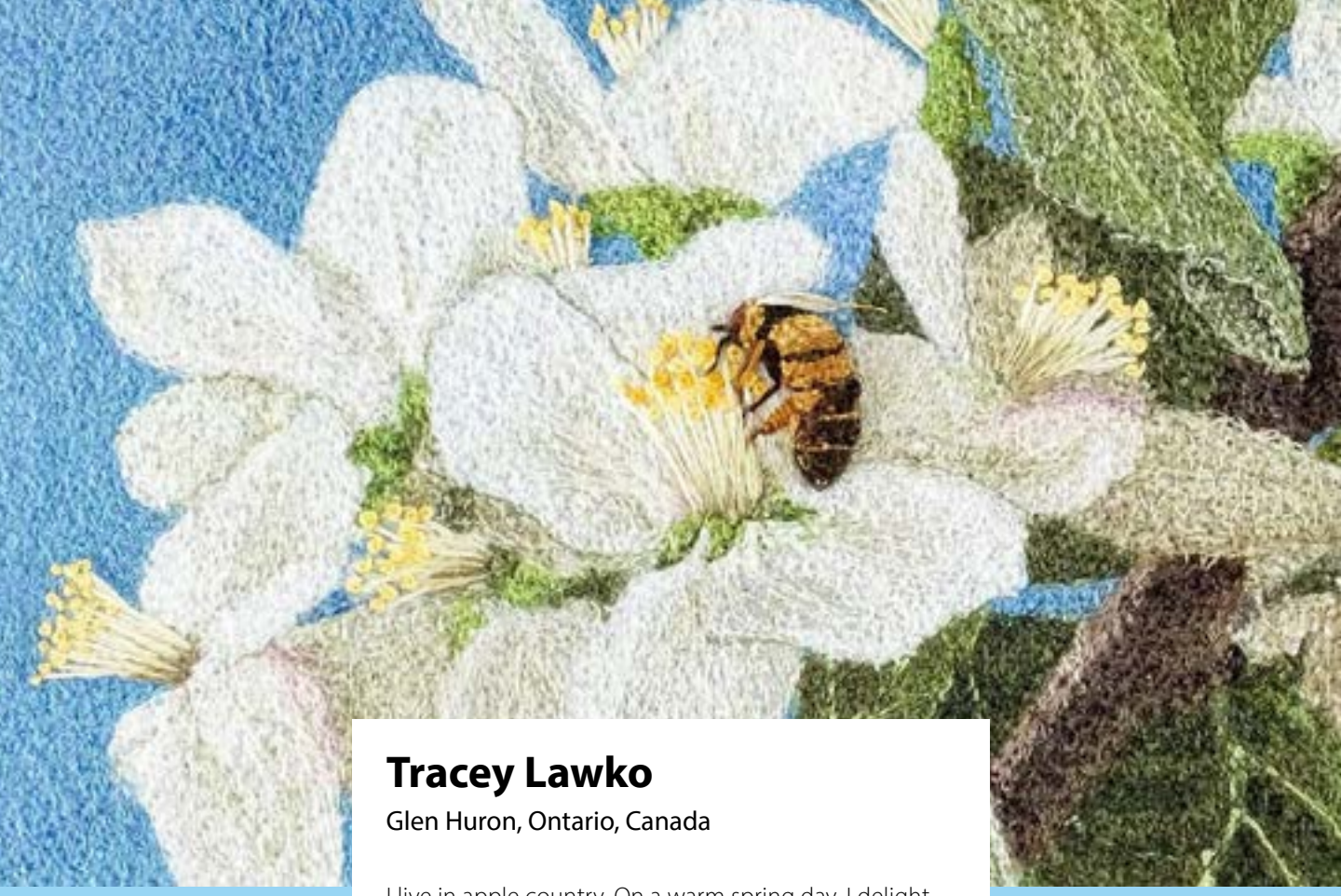
Cotton fabric, cotton thread, Inktense pencils

Raw edge appliquéd, pieced, painted



Symbiosis - Monarchs & Milkweed

22 x 20 inches | 56 x 51 cm | 2025



Tracey Lawko

Glen Huron, Ontario, Canada

I live in apple country. On a warm spring day, I delight in the soft hum of honeybees busily pollinating apple blossoms throughout the orchard, knowing that I will enjoy the fruits of their labor in the fall. A honeybee will visit 50–100 flowers during a collection trip, and potentially 1,000 in a day. While collecting nectar for energy and pollen for the hive, a bee helps plants reproduce by moving pollen between the male and female parts of a flower to enable the production of seeds. Honeybees were introduced to North America in the 1600s. Honeybees, along with approximately 3600 native bee species in North America, pollinate 80% of all flowering plants.

Thread, embroidery floss, cotton fabric, stabilizer

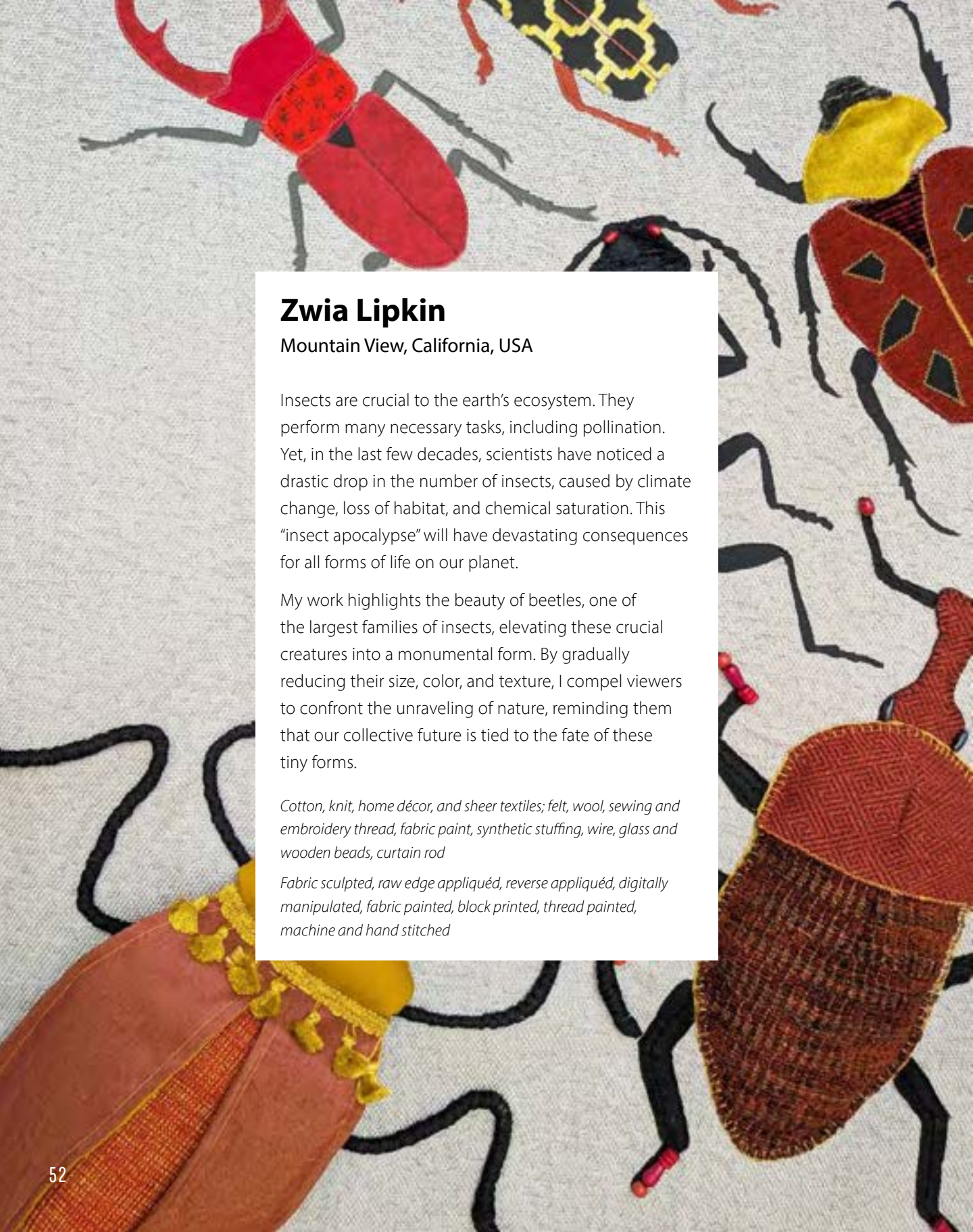
Hand-guided longarm machine stitched, collaged, hand embroidered, stumpwork embroidered



Honeybee

12 x 9 inches | 30 x 23 cm | 2018

Photo by Peter Blaiklock



Zwia Lipkin

Mountain View, California, USA

Insects are crucial to the earth's ecosystem. They perform many necessary tasks, including pollination. Yet, in the last few decades, scientists have noticed a drastic drop in the number of insects, caused by climate change, loss of habitat, and chemical saturation. This "insect apocalypse" will have devastating consequences for all forms of life on our planet.

My work highlights the beauty of beetles, one of the largest families of insects, elevating these crucial creatures into a monumental form. By gradually reducing their size, color, and texture, I compel viewers to confront the unraveling of nature, reminding them that our collective future is tied to the fate of these tiny forms.

Cotton, knit, home décor, and sheer textiles; felt, wool, sewing and embroidery thread, fabric paint, synthetic stuffing, wire, glass and wooden beads, curtain rod

Fabric sculpted, raw edge appliquéd, reverse appliquéd, digitally manipulated, fabric painted, block printed, thread painted, machine and hand stitched



March to Oblivion

84 x 34 x 5 inches | 213 x 86 x 13 cm | 2025

Rachael Logsdon

Indian Trail, North Carolina, USA

Although small, mighty pollinators play a crucial role in our survival. Inspired by Harry Ridgeway's photos, this quilt was created to bring attention to our tiniest champions. Insects, birds, and mammals can contribute to pollination, and all are beautiful in their own way. The circles symbolize the Circle of Life, while the strawberries symbolize Earth's bounty, thanks to our pollinators.

Photos by Harry Ridgeway of the butterfly and hummingbird used with permission.

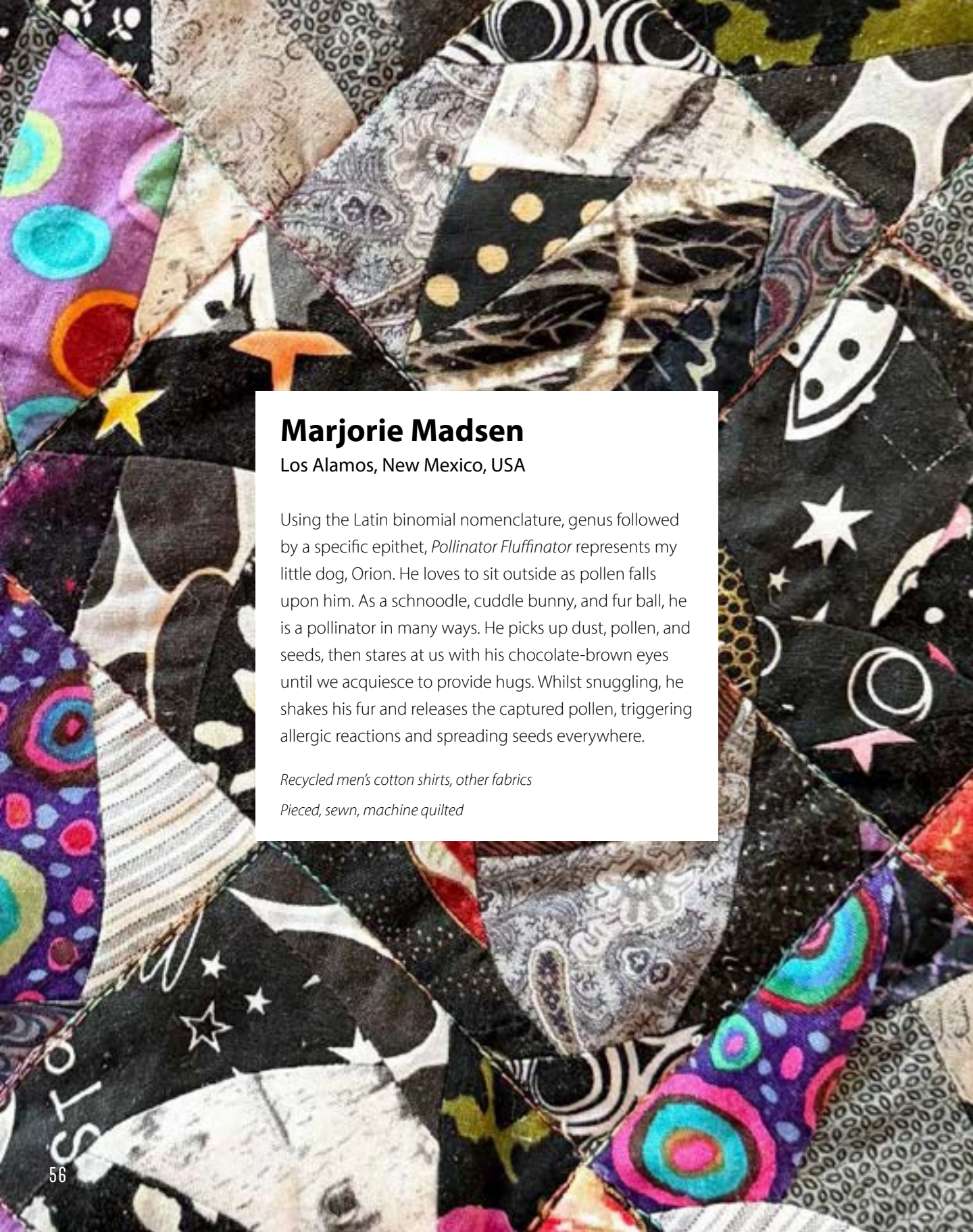
Cotton, fusible web, polyester, fabric markers

Collaged, free motion quilted, trapunto quilted



Flower Power

36 x 29 inches | 91 x 74 cm | 2025



Marjorie Madsen

Los Alamos, New Mexico, USA

Using the Latin binomial nomenclature, genus followed by a specific epithet, *Pollinator Fluffinator* represents my little dog, Orion. He loves to sit outside as pollen falls upon him. As a schnoodle, cuddle bunny, and fur ball, he is a pollinator in many ways. He picks up dust, pollen, and seeds, then stares at us with his chocolate-brown eyes until we acquiesce to provide hugs. Whilst snuggling, he shakes his fur and releases the captured pollen, triggering allergic reactions and spreading seeds everywhere.

Recycled men's cotton shirts, other fabrics

Pieced, sewn, machine quilted



Pollinator Fluffinator

35 x 35 inches | 89 x 89 cm | 2025



Ruth E. Manny

Houston, Texas, USA

Monarchs pollinate primarily wildflowers as well as some fruit trees and vegetables. Their wings provide more than flight between snacks and migration. The bright orange color of the monarch's wings warns predators that they are poisonous. They provide temperature regulation, a way to determine its sex, and an indication of the butterfly's age. Depicted here is a magnified view of the scales (60 micrometers across) that compose the monarch's wings on a milkweed leaf. The top stitching on the scales represents the scale's ridges. The bright coloration with scales intact suggests a young monarch before migration.

Fabric, yarn, fabric ink

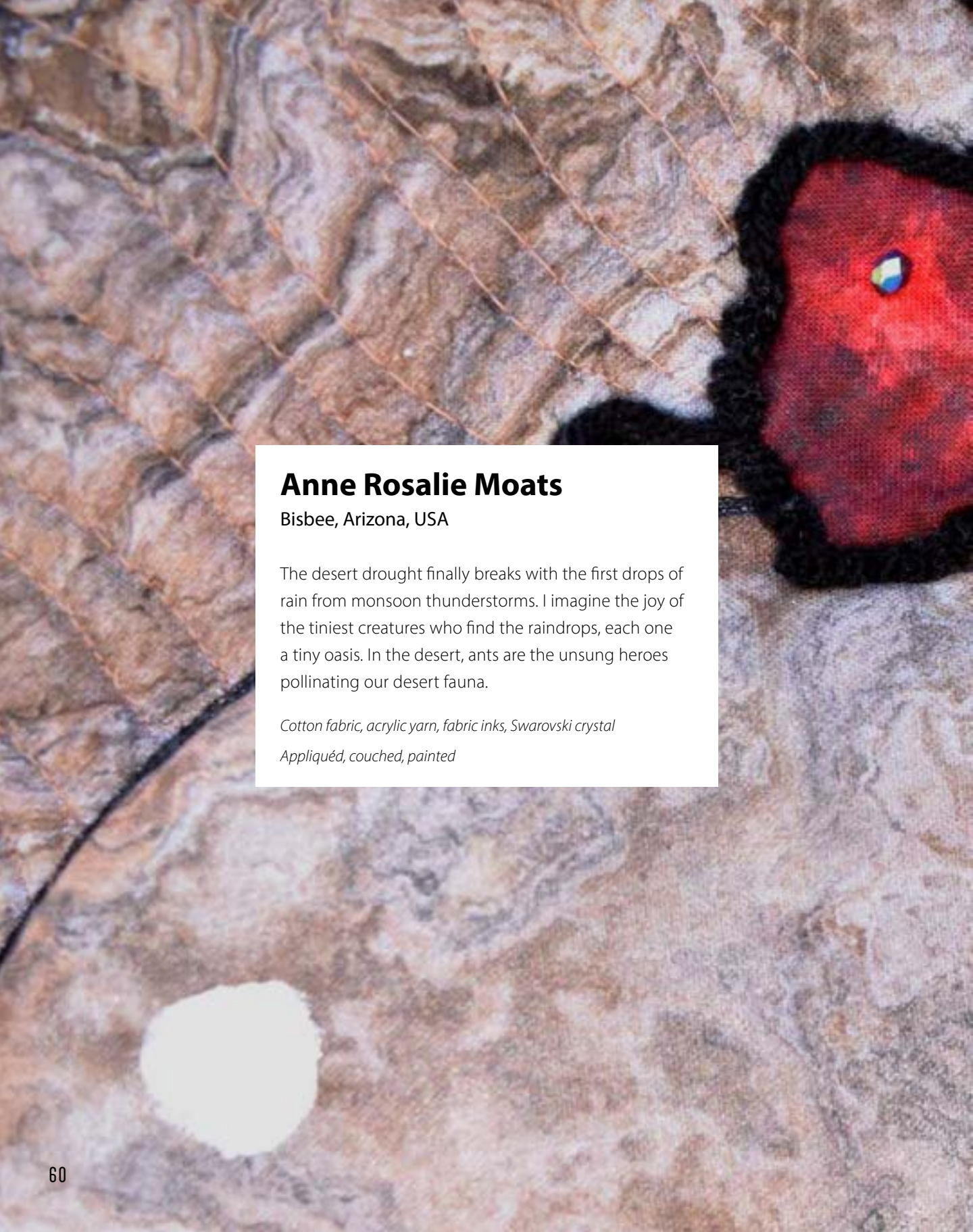
Machine pieced, machine quilted, appliquéd, couched



Monarch Magnified

20 x 20 inches | 51 x 51 cm | 2023

Photo by Rick Wells



Anne Rosalie Moats

Bisbee, Arizona, USA

The desert drought finally breaks with the first drops of rain from monsoon thunderstorms. I imagine the joy of the tiniest creatures who find the raindrops, each one a tiny oasis. In the desert, ants are the unsung heroes pollinating our desert fauna.

Cotton fabric, acrylic yarn, fabric inks, Swarovski crystal

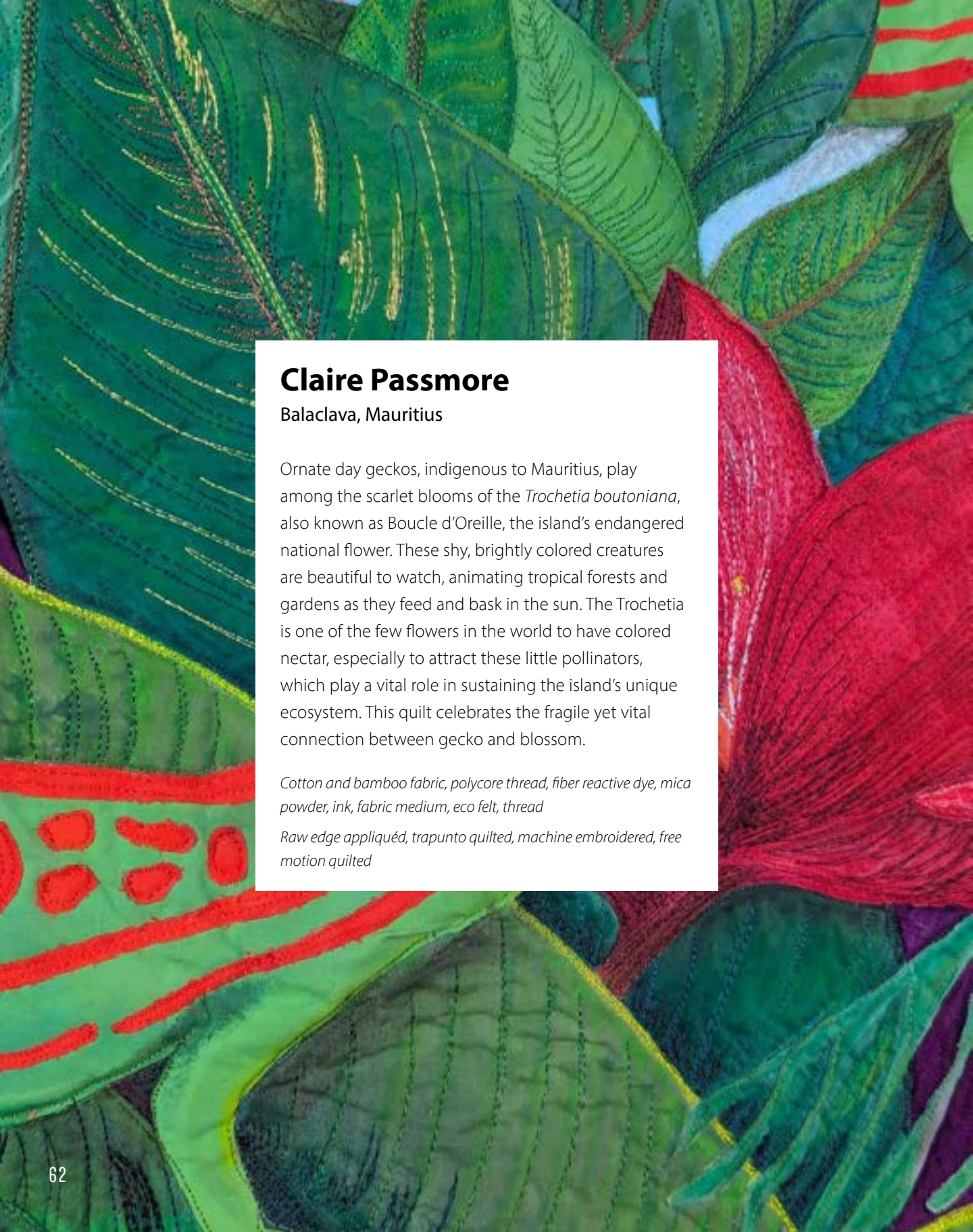
Appliquéd, couched, painted



Precious Desert Oasis

41 x 27 inches | 104 x 69 cm | 2021

Photo by Stacie Moats



Claire Passmore

Balaclava, Mauritius

Ornate day geckos, indigenous to Mauritius, play among the scarlet blooms of the *Trochetia boutoniana*, also known as Boucle d'Oreille, the island's endangered national flower. These shy, brightly colored creatures are beautiful to watch, animating tropical forests and gardens as they feed and bask in the sun. The Trochetia is one of the few flowers in the world to have colored nectar, especially to attract these little pollinators, which play a vital role in sustaining the island's unique ecosystem. This quilt celebrates the fragile yet vital connection between gecko and blossom.

Cotton and bamboo fabric, polycore thread, fiber reactive dye, mica powder, ink, fabric medium, eco felt, thread

Raw edge appliquéd, trapunto quilted, machine embroidered, free motion quilted



Pollinating Paradise

37 x 36 inches | 94 x 91 cm | 2025



Karen Peters

Kirkland, Washington, USA

Bees and butterflies get all the glory. But if it wasn't for me, Chocolate Midge, there wouldn't be any chocolate! I'm the only one who can efficiently pollinate the tiny flowers of the cacao tree. Which allows them to form cacao beans, which happen to be the key ingredient of chocolate.

I'm picky about where I live and work; I like a shady, humid, tropical environment. Preferably in the rainforest. But intensive farming, pesticides, and climate change are threatening my home. I can't thrive just anywhere. And why shouldn't I be choosy about my environment? I should be a star, with a chocolate bar named after me. After all, without me there won't be any chocolate.

Interior design fabric samples, cotton, synthetics, embroidery floss, wool yarn

Machine pieced, hand appliquéd, screen printed, hand embroidered, machine and hand quilted



No More Chocolate?!

39 x 25 inches | 99 x 64 cm | 2025



Gabrielle Pentz Ryan

Scottsdale, Arizona, USA

The best-known pollinators are bees and butterflies; other insects do not get credit for their role in pollination. Moths are overlooked because they are mostly nocturnal and less visible. But their important contribution to pollination cannot be ignored: moths are excellent pollinators, thanks to their hairy underbellies. Moths outnumber butterflies by a ratio of 10 to 1. Moths carry pollen over long distances, increasing plant genetic diversity, while butterflies feed locally. As dusk settles, day pollinators rest and nighttime pollinators emerge. This female Feathered Thorn moth wakes from sleep, ready to work. Her look says, "Move over, butterflies and bees! Here comes the night shift!"

Cotton, polyester thread, fabric dyes

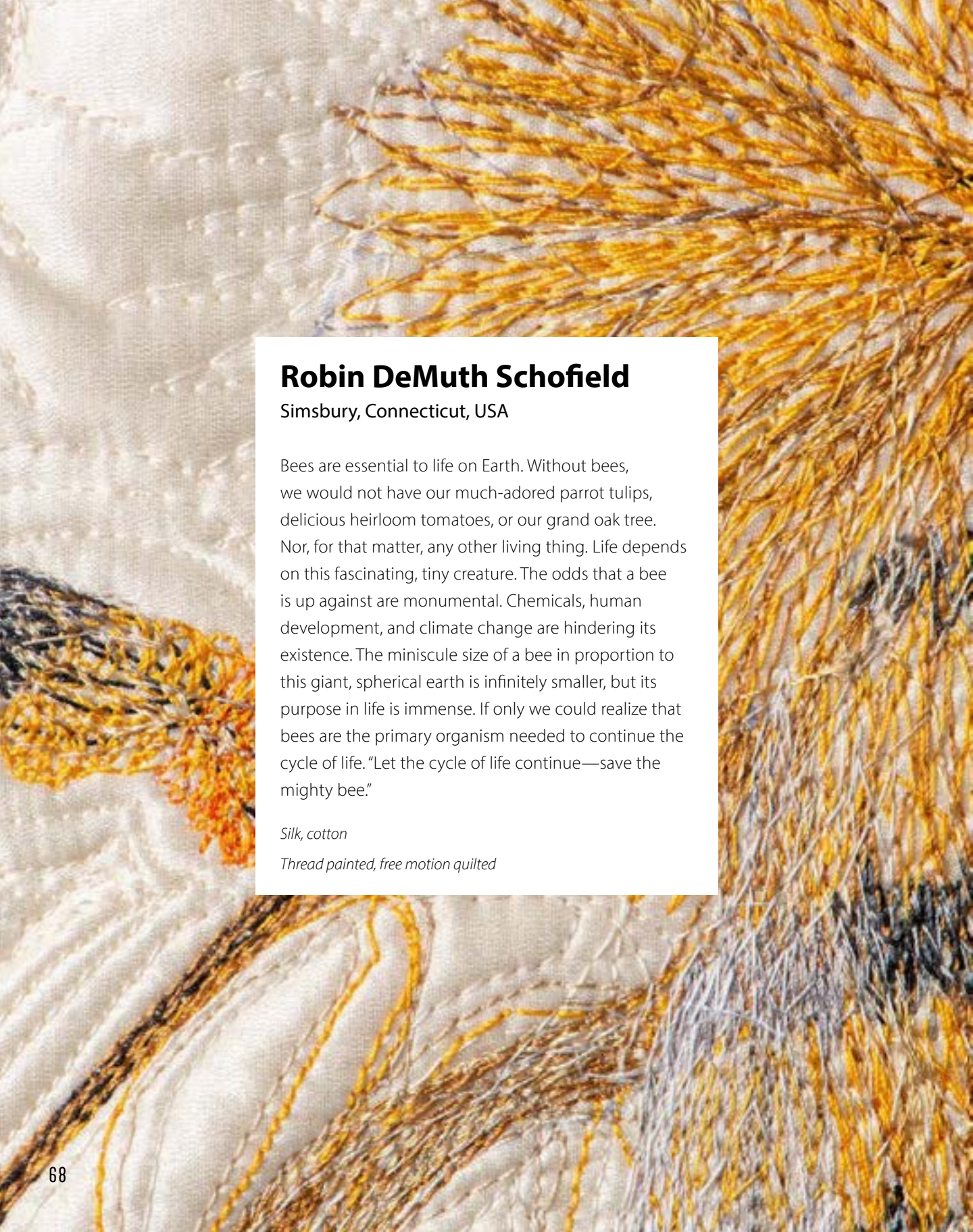
Painted, quilted



Here Comes the Night Shift

16 x 27 inches | 41 x 69 cm | 2025

Photo by Dennis Eckel Photography



Robin DeMuth Schofield

Simsbury, Connecticut, USA

Bees are essential to life on Earth. Without bees, we would not have our much-adored parrot tulips, delicious heirloom tomatoes, or our grand oak tree. Nor, for that matter, any other living thing. Life depends on this fascinating, tiny creature. The odds that a bee is up against are monumental. Chemicals, human development, and climate change are hindering its existence. The miniscule size of a bee in proportion to this giant, spherical earth is infinitely smaller, but its purpose in life is immense. If only we could realize that bees are the primary organism needed to continue the cycle of life. "Let the cycle of life continue—save the mighty bee."

Silk, cotton

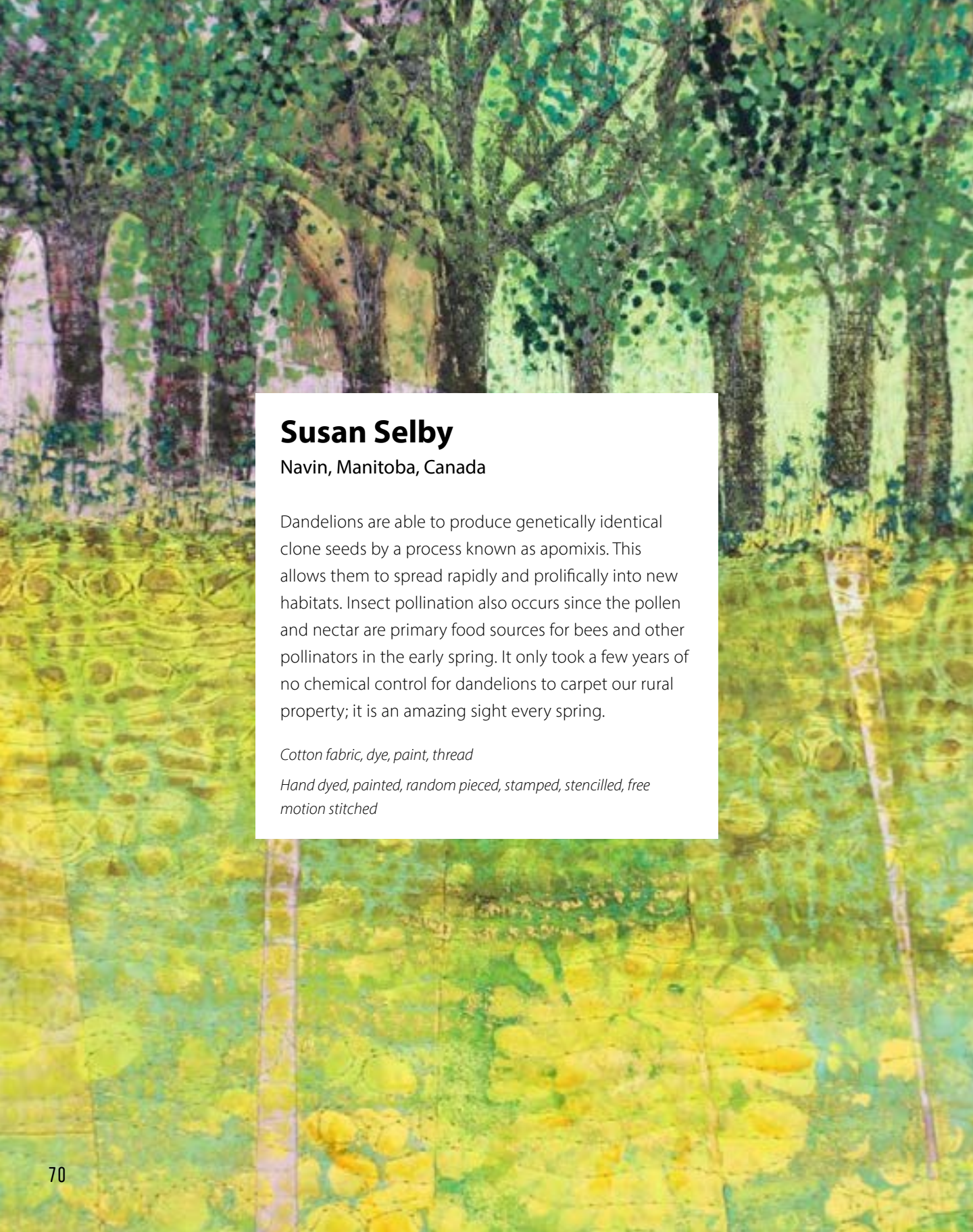
Thread painted, free motion quilted



Choices

22 x 17 inches | 56 x 43 cm | 2025

Photo by Cleary Creative Photography



Susan Selby

Navin, Manitoba, Canada

Dandelions are able to produce genetically identical clone seeds by a process known as apomixis. This allows them to spread rapidly and prolifically into new habitats. Insect pollination also occurs since the pollen and nectar are primary food sources for bees and other pollinators in the early spring. It only took a few years of no chemical control for dandelions to carpet our rural property; it is an amazing sight every spring.

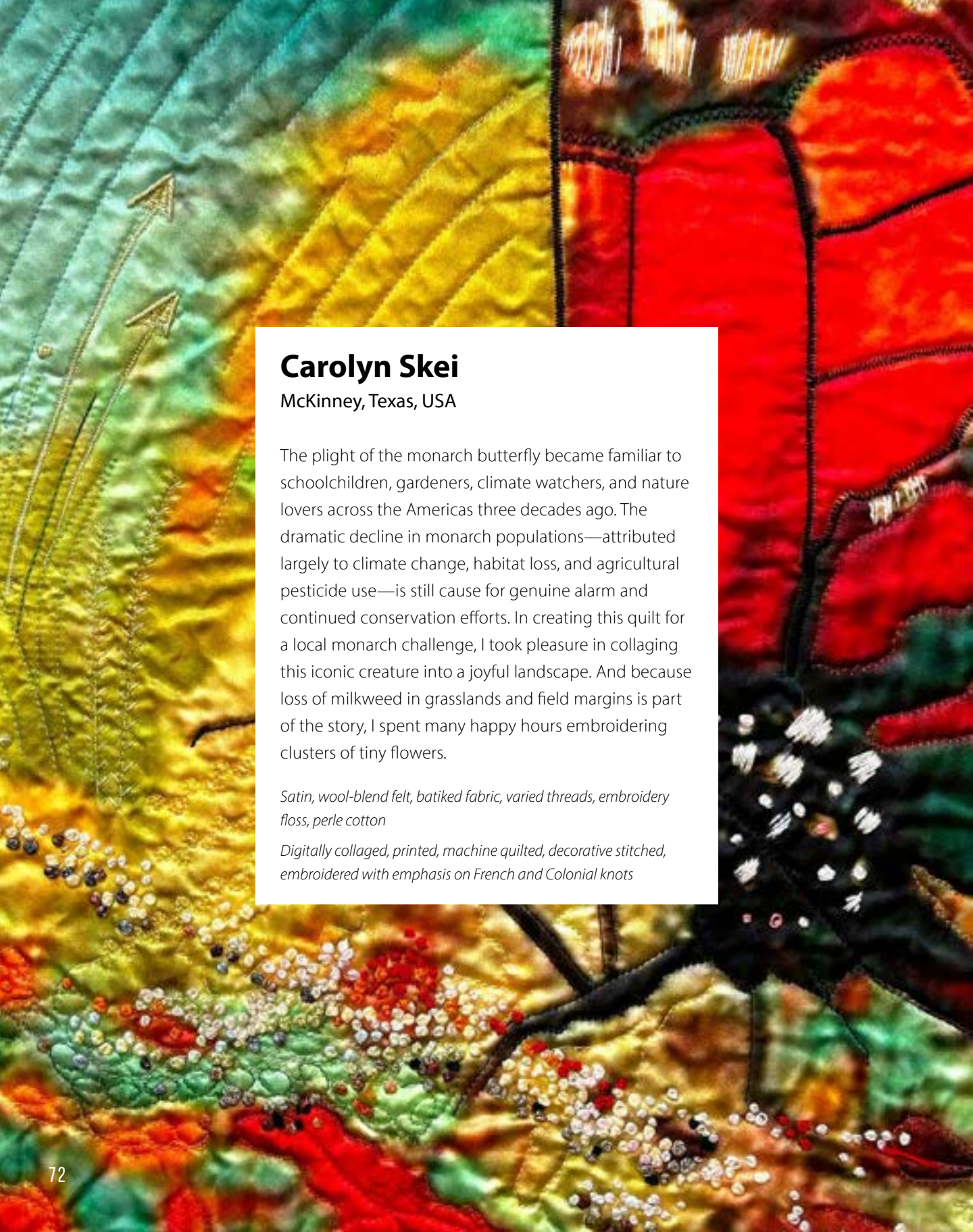
Cotton fabric, dye, paint, thread

Hand dyed, painted, random pieced, stamped, stencilled, free motion stitched



Dandelion Season

38 x 37 inches | 97 x 94 cm | 2025



Carolyn Skei

McKinney, Texas, USA

The plight of the monarch butterfly became familiar to schoolchildren, gardeners, climate watchers, and nature lovers across the Americas three decades ago. The dramatic decline in monarch populations—attributed largely to climate change, habitat loss, and agricultural pesticide use—is still cause for genuine alarm and continued conservation efforts. In creating this quilt for a local monarch challenge, I took pleasure in collaging this iconic creature into a joyful landscape. And because loss of milkweed in grasslands and field margins is part of the story, I spent many happy hours embroidering clusters of tiny flowers.

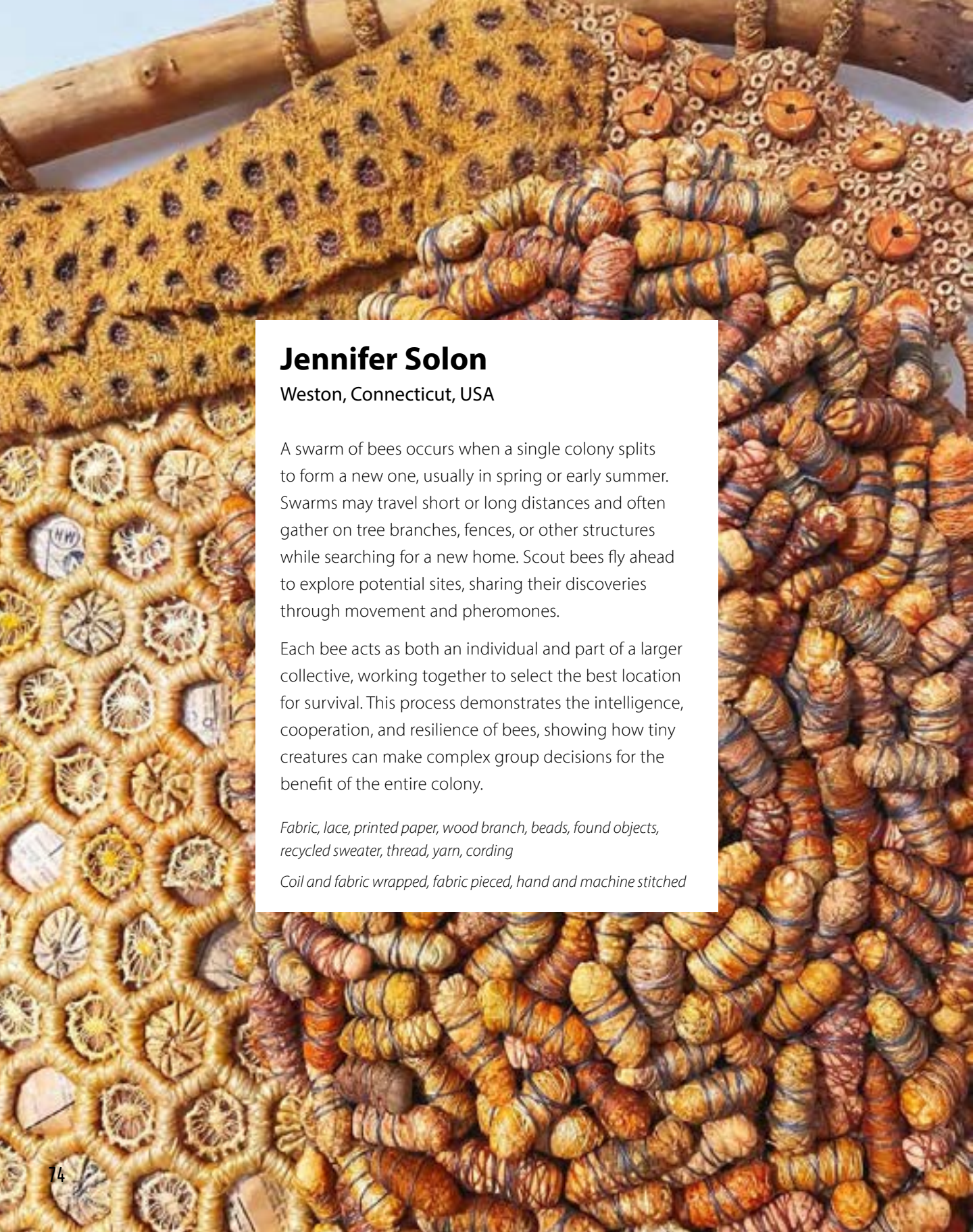
Satin, wool-blend felt, batiked fabric, varied threads, embroidery floss, perle cotton

Digitally collaged, printed, machine quilted, decorative stitched, embroidered with emphasis on French and Colonial knots



Imperiled Pollinator

22 x 29 inches | 56 x 74 cm | 2021



Jennifer Solon

Weston, Connecticut, USA

A swarm of bees occurs when a single colony splits to form a new one, usually in spring or early summer. Swarms may travel short or long distances and often gather on tree branches, fences, or other structures while searching for a new home. Scout bees fly ahead to explore potential sites, sharing their discoveries through movement and pheromones.

Each bee acts as both an individual and part of a larger collective, working together to select the best location for survival. This process demonstrates the intelligence, cooperation, and resilience of bees, showing how tiny creatures can make complex group decisions for the benefit of the entire colony.

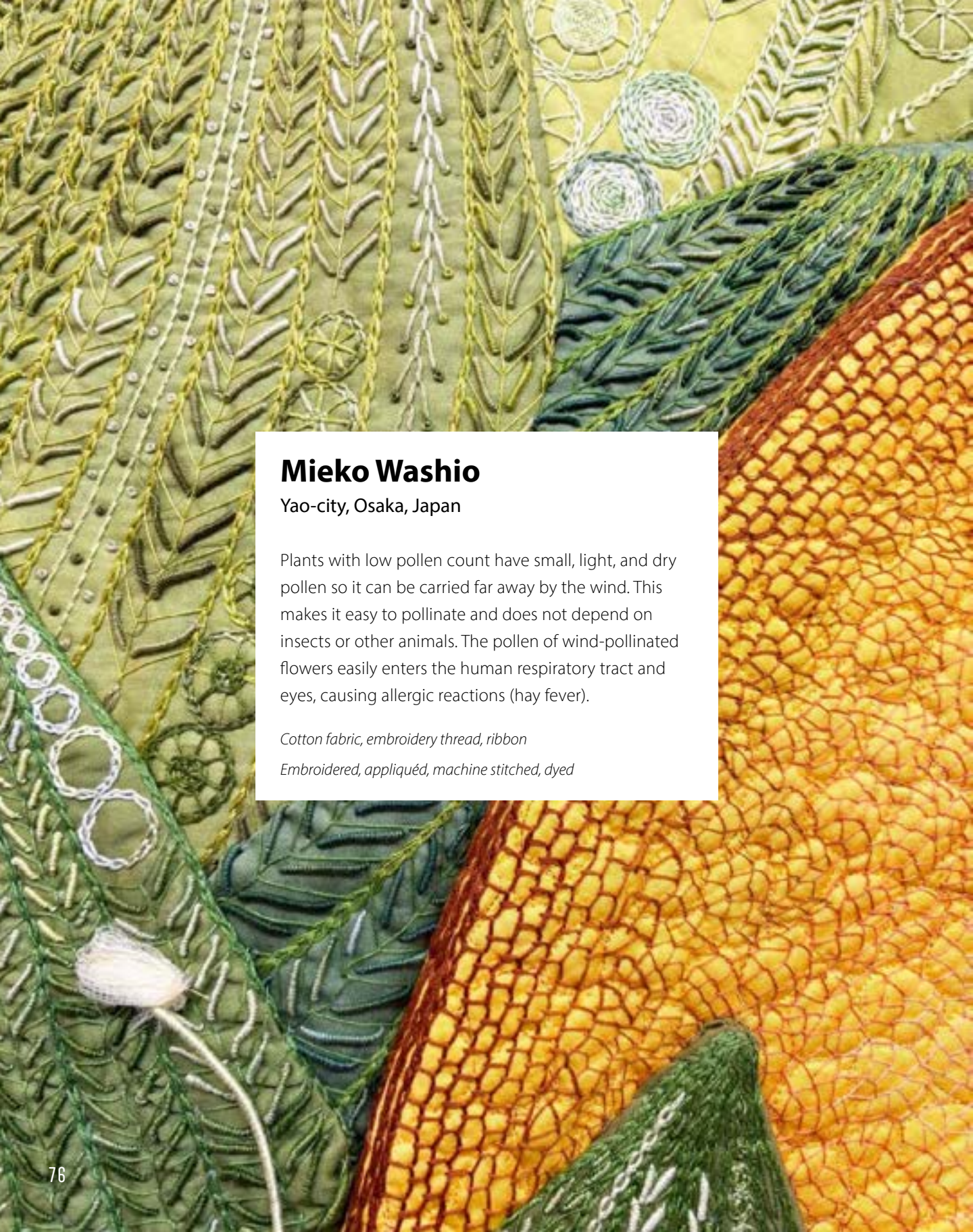
Fabric, lace, printed paper, wood branch, beads, found objects, recycled sweater, thread, yarn, cording

Coil and fabric wrapped, fabric pieced, hand and machine stitched



Swarm

39 x 24 x 3 inches | 99 x 61 x 8 cm | 2025



Mieko Washio

Yao-city, Osaka, Japan

Plants with low pollen count have small, light, and dry pollen so it can be carried far away by the wind. This makes it easy to pollinate and does not depend on insects or other animals. The pollen of wind-pollinated flowers easily enters the human respiratory tract and eyes, causing allergic reactions (hay fever).

Cotton fabric, embroidery thread, ribbon

Embroidered, appliquéd, machine stitched, dyed



Wind Carrier

49 x 37 inches | 124 x 94 cm | 2025



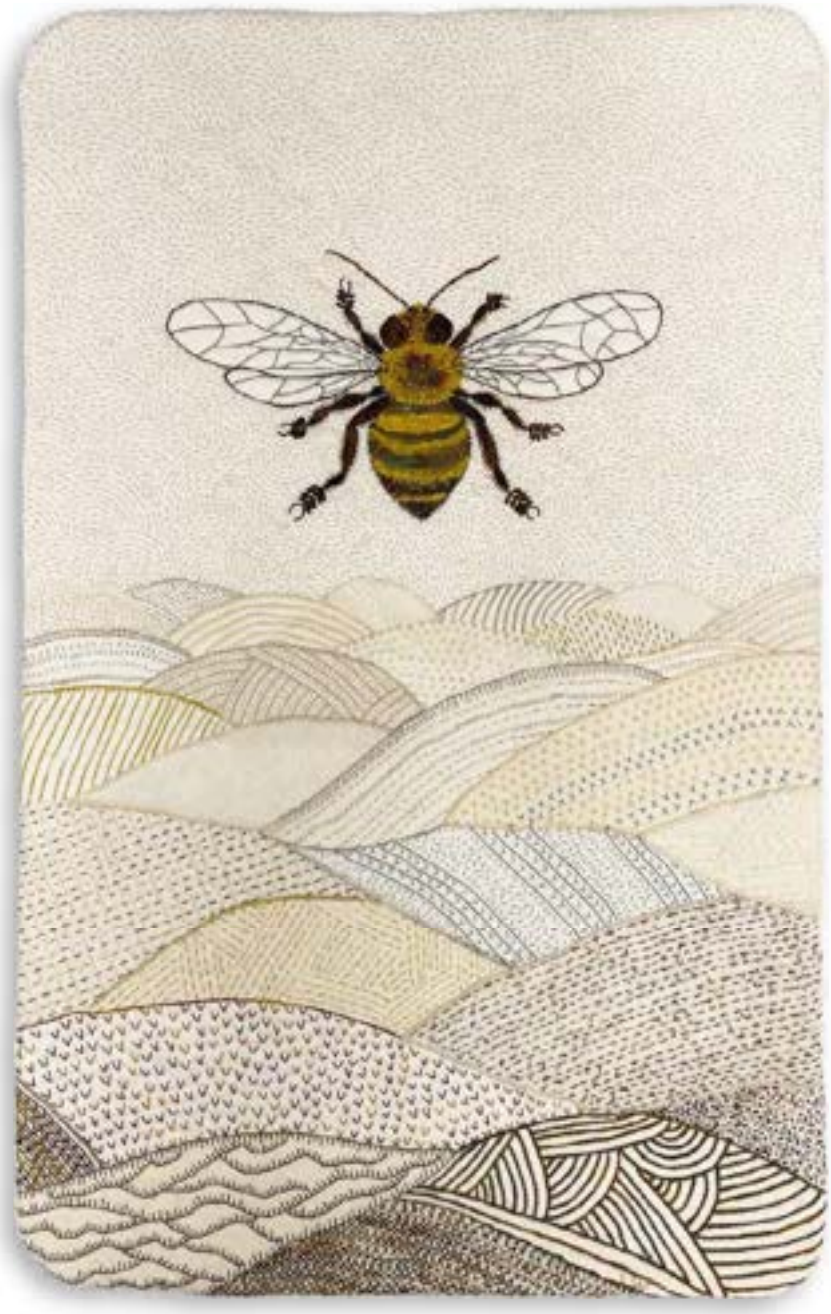
Laura Wasilowski

Elgin, Illinois, USA

Many of the fruits and vegetables we eat were pollinated by an industrious worker, the bee. As bees disappear due to habitat loss, insecticides, and climate change, our food supplies will also disappear. It is in our best interest to keep our bee friends from disappearing by planting native plants in chemical-free environments.

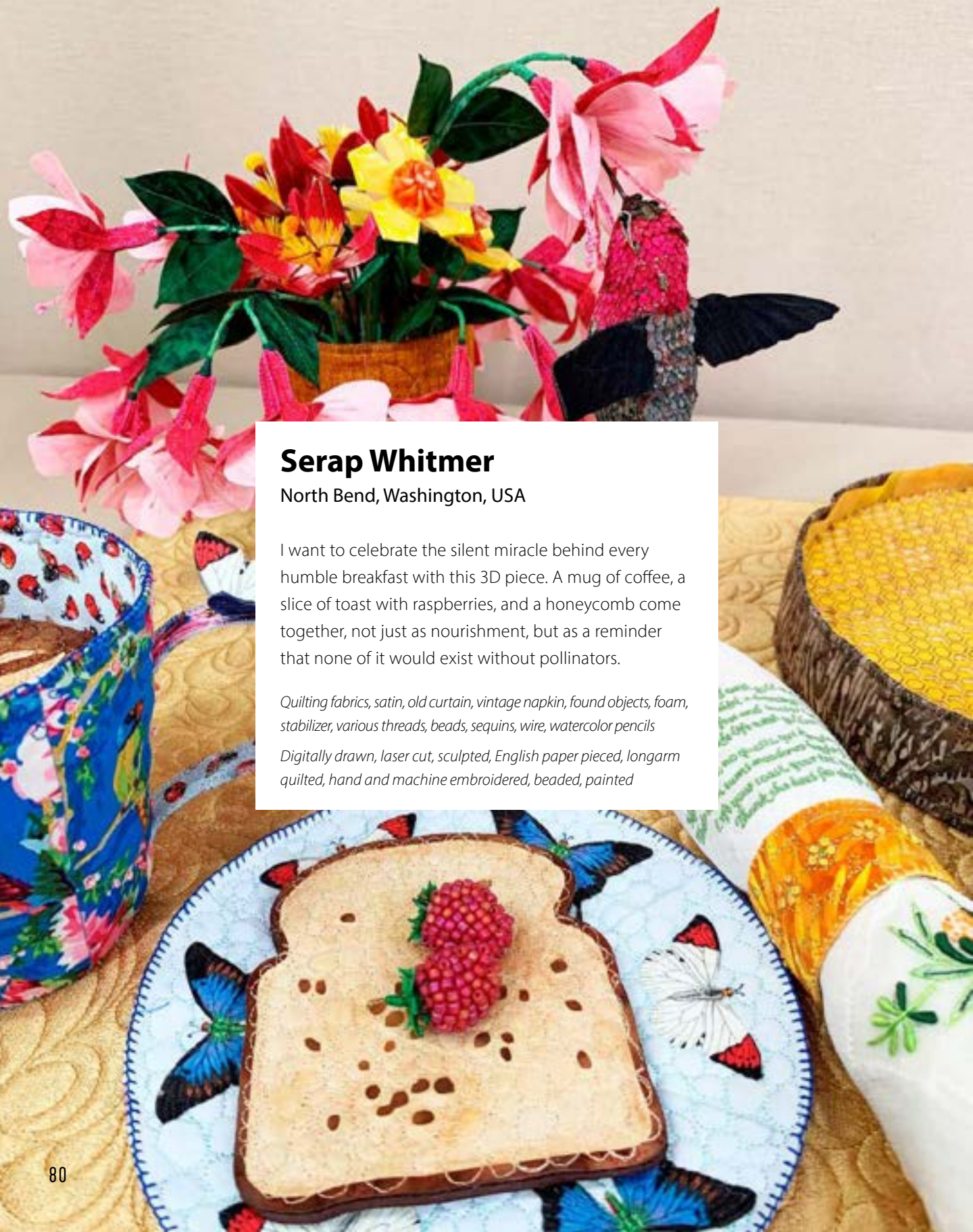
Silk fabrics, perle cotton threads

Hand dyed, fused appliquéd, hand embroidered



Disappearing

21 x 13 inches | 53 x 33 cm | 2025



Serap Whitmer

North Bend, Washington, USA

I want to celebrate the silent miracle behind every humble breakfast with this 3D piece. A mug of coffee, a slice of toast with raspberries, and a honeycomb come together, not just as nourishment, but as a reminder that none of it would exist without pollinators.

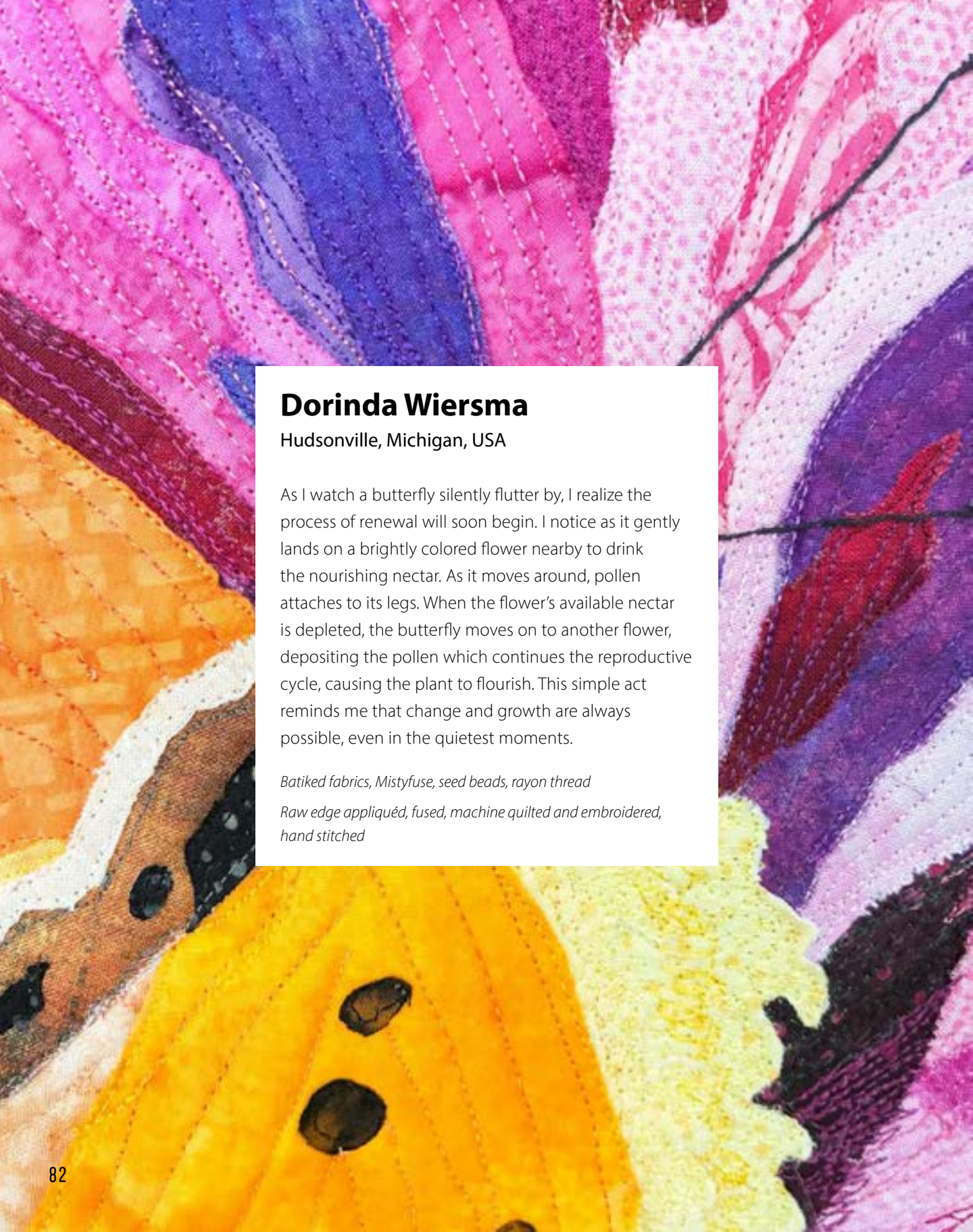
Quilting fabrics, satin, old curtain, vintage napkin, found objects, foam, stabilizer, various threads, beads, sequins, wire, watercolor pencils

Digitally drawn, laser cut, sculpted, English paper pieced, longarm quilted, hand and machine embroidered, beaded, painted



Pollinated & Plated

8 x 16 x 22 inches | 20 x 41 x 56 cm | 2025



Dorinda Wiersma

Hudsonville, Michigan, USA

As I watch a butterfly silently flutter by, I realize the process of renewal will soon begin. I notice as it gently lands on a brightly colored flower nearby to drink the nourishing nectar. As it moves around, pollen attaches to its legs. When the flower's available nectar is depleted, the butterfly moves on to another flower, depositing the pollen which continues the reproductive cycle, causing the plant to flourish. This simple act reminds me that change and growth are always possible, even in the quietest moments.

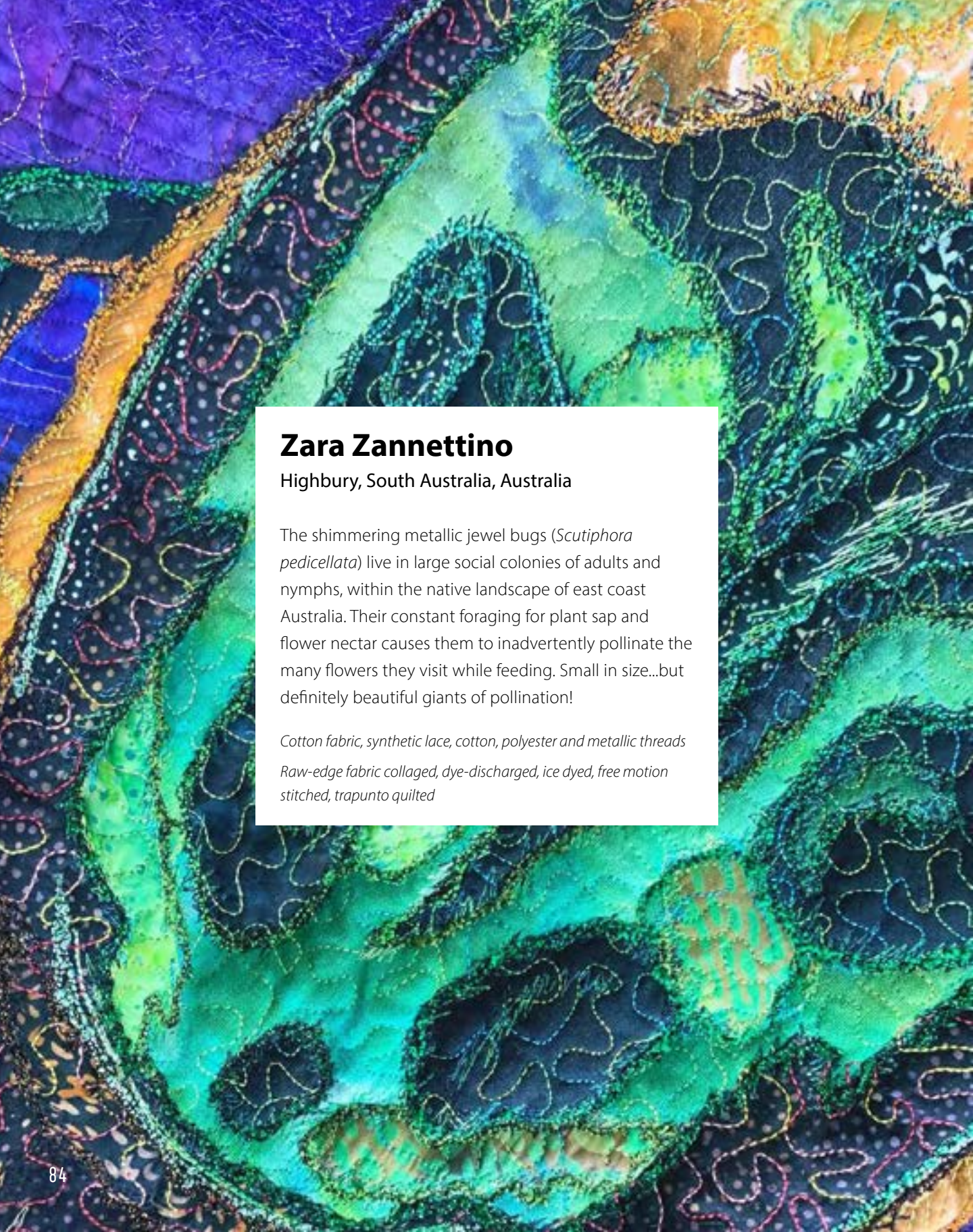
Batiked fabrics, Mistyfuse, seed beads, rayon thread

Raw edge appliquéd, fused, machine quilted and embroidered, hand stitched



Flutter & Flourish

41 x 32 inches | 104 x 81 cm | 2025



Zara Zannettino

Highbury, South Australia, Australia

The shimmering metallic jewel bugs (*Scutiphora pedicellata*) live in large social colonies of adults and nymphs, within the native landscape of east coast Australia. Their constant foraging for plant sap and flower nectar causes them to inadvertently pollinate the many flowers they visit while feeding. Small in size...but definitely beautiful giants of pollination!

Cotton fabric, synthetic lace, cotton, polyester and metallic threads

Raw-edge fabric collaged, dye-discharged, ice dyed, free motion stitched, trapunto quilted



Travel Bug

55 x 38 inches | 140 x 97 cm | 2022

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