StorySave 2013

QUILTBOOK

Storytellers of Canada
Conteurs du Canada

Quilt Contributors

Constance Faucher	*Under the Acacia Tree*
Danica Lorer	*Story and Truth*
Kathy Bennett	*Words… Just Words*
Kathie Kompass	*Horsey, Horsey on your way*
Al and Sheila Fowler	*SANKOFA BIRD*
Karen Gummo	*Cora*
Clara Dugas	*The Giving Tree*
Lorraine Jeansonne	*The Plant and its Jewel*
Marie-Ann McLean	*The Treasure Box*
Kevin MacKenzie	*Ganesh*
Elinor Benjamin	*For Jennie and Jan – Greek Meanders and an Invocation to the Muse*
Pearl-Ann Gooding	*RED*
Ann Nagy	*Tribute to Jan Andrews: Friend, Mentor, Rock Climber*
Sylvi Belleau et Nicole Filliatrault	*«Deux amies»*
Christine Mayr	*"untitled"*
Pearl-Ann Gooding	*Three Apples Fell*
Laura O'Connor	*Same but Different*

Winner of the Quilt

Robert Frappier

Under the Acacia Tree

Constance Faucher - Saskatoon, SK

When I first saw the bright colors of the quilt piece, I was immediately reminded of Africa. StorySave, saving a story, was done by many elders, as they told and retold stories under the shadow of an acacia tree. Stories were saved from generation to generation!

I've used a black permanent marking pen made specifically for fabric. However, to me, the color did not go on dark enough, even thouh I went over the drawings several times.

Story and truth

Danica Lorer - Langham, SK

My block for the 2013 Storysave Quilt is the naked Truth wrapped in Story's beautiful cloak. I loved the telling of this story by the young woman from the UK, the Red Phoenix. She shared it during the 2012 conference in Montreal. I love the idea of a thin thread of truth running through all of our stories while our experiences, personalities and creativity colour them and make them beautiful and unique. Some of the reasons stories are so important to me is that they allow me to learn the truth about myself, to explore the truth of our shared history as human beings and to find truth to persevere during challenging times. I can't tell a story if I don't believe some truth in it.

I injected a bit of myself into the panel using my children as hair models and hand stitched all of the pieces to the backing.

Enjoy the warmth of being wrapped in the beauty of Story's cloak and this beautiful quilt.

Words… just words

Kathy Bennett - Saskatoon, SK

As storytellers, we all know the importance of words. As human beings, look at how we all patiently and anxiously await the first recognizable spoken word of a child! Next, we wait to hear how that child puts two or three words together to express a desire or need…and how we praise that child when they make themselves easily understood by using the correct words.

Storytelling to me then, in part, is a number of words strung together to express an idea, an emotion, a teaching or a story. Oral storytelling supplies a hint of the proper emotion or feeling correctly attached to those particular words that are told. When done well, storytelling brings forth a connection between the teller and the listener that generates a level of excitement and emotion not possible in any other way. Remember the glow you felt the first time you received applause for a story you told?

I've tried to express, with a bit of fabric paint, some of how putting words together can capture that excitement. I've used the beginning words of some of the stories I tell…and only the beginning words. I shuffled papers with those words around and I was surprised that they ended up just like this!

Horsey, horsey on your way

Kathie Kompass - Ottawa, ON

I'm a Cross Stitcher but not a cross one. I did this rocking horse block a year or 2 ago and have been looking for a 'stable' place for it ever since. I think that this year's quilt offers a suitable stall for my pony.
A rhyme to go with this horse is this one.
My granddaughter, Scarlett, enjoyed saying it with me when we walked past the fence where the horses were supposed to be.

Horsey, horsey on your way
We've been together for many a day
So let your tail go swish and your wheels go round
Giddy-up we're homeward bound

Sankofa Bird

Sheila and Al Fowler - Victoria, BC

The legendary Sankofa bird is a powerful symbol for the Akan people of Ghana, West Africa, with its head turned facing backwards, often with an egg in its mouth. The Sankofa bird looks back to where it came from, as it decides the path that it will take in the future. In the same way, past history and traditions must be remembered and respected as plans are made for the future.

Sankofa is an Adindra word from the Akan people of Africa. The English translation of this word would be 'returning to your roots, recapturing what you've lost and moving forward'. An alternate translation is 'No matter how far away one travels, he must always return home.'

Cora

Karen Gummo - Calgary, AB

Shhh — She lies in state. Sacrificed herself for the story.

I have to tell you that I'd never met her before. Didn't know her at all. I imagine that she once had a beautiful hopeful face. Her shiny black hair reflected all the colours of the rainbow. ...Cora, Cora...

I didn't know she would be so taken with her reflection that she would forget everything and smash into the glass. It was stronger than she was. She might have been running from something too and thought the window was her escape route...

My neighbour told me that he found her there, by the house. She was badly hurt. He brought her to the garden and bade her to rest awhile. She couldn't seem to do it. So determined was she to make the best of a bad situation. I walked right by her the first time — didn't even notice her. Then when I did, I felt shocked and awed by her. Poor thing.

She was hidden at first under a tomato plant. Funny, the things that can be hidden under a tomato plant.

Hovering nearby as she quivered and trembled, I wondered «how could I help her?» She tried several times to get up. I wondered if her leg was broken...or something else.

I felt helpless... Perhaps I shouldn't interfere... «No,» I said to myself. «Let nature take its course.»
I hurried away not wanting to look, took a deep breath, distracted myself, got ready for my bike ride. It was a beautiful day...

Best get going I thought. Let her be... Will I find her again when I get back? I wondered.

There is nothing you can do Karen... We began to pedal away.

She traveled with me though, in my thoughts. Everything I discovered on my way brought me back to her. Can you connect these things?

On the pedestrian bridge, the blue cereal bowl, encrusted with corn flakes, spoon just adjacent.
The Yorkshire terrier on the driveway awaiting his beloved.

The bow - legged, walking sticks passing under the bridge at Crowchild Trail.

Thoughts of other travelers over the south trail to Morleyville. Had Cora come this way? I felt her presence here.

So many surprises! Listen to this...

As I was traveling up the ramp over Glenmore Trail, there it was on the yellow line in between the comings and the goings — a leather bound Bible. When the wind whipped up, what page would it open to?

Cora

Karen Gummo - Calgary, AB

We descended into the Weaselhead Valley. There was a rich tapestry of fall colours set against a flax blue sky. Down at the valley bottom there were skeleton trees.

Round the reservoir we continued, memories of slipping naked into that same cold clear water — after dark...

A surprise rendezvous...time to linger, warm sun on our backs...

A murder of ravens — caw caw caw! A mangle of Magpies — mag mag mag. What was the story? Fact or fiction?

Time evaporated. Got to get home, back to Cora. Cora Cora... Scents of rotting leaves, crunching, slipping under turning wheels...

We snaked along waterways, empty pathways, friendly greetings and unplanned meetings, near misses. How fragile this journey.

Came through the cacophony of downtown. — Caw caw caw

Now to climb up again

Every muscle straining as I pushed up the hill. Shifted down too late. Gotta get home.

He absorbed in his own world got way ahead. Left me in the dust. Red lights caught me once, twice, three times.

I don't mind, I'm just taking the time I need. I am so hungry. Must get back to Cora.

I round the corner onto Morley trail. There he is stopped by the curb. I jet past him.

Even with my angry burst, he surges ahead again.

We turn onto our street. He beats me there. «Where is she?» I blurt.

He points to the opposite sidewalk.

There she was all stretched out, resting in peace. The hornets and flies already feasting on her eyes.

We went in for lunch - after I took a photograph. I felt so callous, so hungry

Later that day she was gone. Part of me felt relief but I did wonder who would have taken her...

She surrendered herself.

The wind got up and I found her in a pile of leaves — flattened...

I brushed off the leaves. There was her iridescent coat — a little disheveled maybe. She had a spirited look about her.
Now she lies in state on my back step. I keep checking on her.

She is generous and I am thankful. I didn't know her before but now I think I do. She gave up her life for the story.

The Giving Tree

Clara Dugas - Pleasantville, NS

As soon as I received my square for the quilt I looked at the bright yellow and I thought of splendid sunshine, warm and embracing. And I thought of trees growing under that bright sun but mostly I thought of one tree in particular – The Giving Tree.

Shel Silverstein's story The Giving Tree has been a favorite of mine for years. It is a beautiful story of giving, unconditionally, and of lovingly, willingly and openly. A review of the book says:
This is a tender story … Shel Silverstein has created a moving parable for readers of all ages that offers an affecting interpretation of the gift of giving and a serene acceptance of another's capacity to love in return.

This made me think of Storytellers of Canada/Conteurs du Canada. Like a 20 year old tree, it too is well rooted, living and vibrant organism. Our stories, like ROOTS, told and shared, keep us solid on common grounds. The trunk of the tree, reaching out to its members, is the backbone of SC-CC, the organizers, the members at large, the Board, the Provincial Coordinators.

The branches reaching out are like the volunteers that give hours and hours of their time for the passion of story, enabling us to enjoy the comfort of THE FRUIT, ah the sweet fruit of the tree, stories and StorySave.

The plant and its jewel

Lorraine Jeansonne - Ottawa, ON

Symbolic of The plant and its jewel with the story tale and the story teller:

The leaves of the plant form a circle around its stem. We are doing the same thing, forming a circle to listen to a tale of the storyteller. The leaves capture the small drops of water from fog or mist and roll them down to the center of the plant to nourish the plant itself and also to nourish animals and insects. This water is its jewel. It is also our reaction to hearing a tale. In fact, the storyteller will emphasise the tale by our reactions by sustaining the suspense or the magic effect of the tale.

So, such like this plant, the story tale and the storyteller become a jewel because they benefit from the presence of each member of the circle and everyone gets out with a wonderful living experience because attending to a story tale's event. Our joy will be contagious.

I used green taffetas, white embroidery, imitating the fog or mist, beads imitating small drops and the jewel, silver thread and green thread. The taffetas edge's fibers, imitating the fibers' fog or mist's catchers surrounding each leaves and stem.

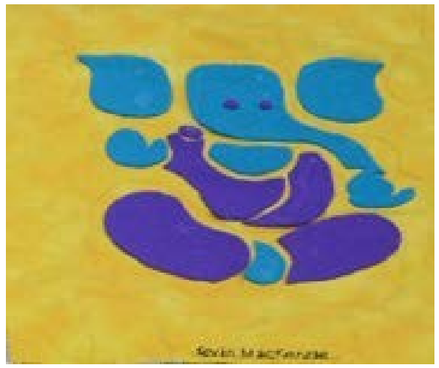
The Treasure Box

Marie Anne McLean - Edmonton, AB

I made it because I really wanted to find a way to acknowledge Jan's many gifts to storytelling.

Ganesh

Kevin MacKenzie - Saskatoon, SK



Ganesh is viewed by many to be the first in the pantheon of Hindu Gods. He is the guy at the gate. And everyone knows him, mainly because he has the head of an elephant. But that is just the beginning. In the beginning, Ganesh was a sun god. He is a re-incarnation of one of the earliest.

Ganesha is a guy with the head of an elephant. As if that is not cool enough, he is also the Remover of Obstacles, the Lord of Beginnings and the God of Arts, Sciences, Intellect and Wisdom. And he rides on a rat, which represents desire, and his riding it represents the mastery of desire. But mainly, he has this great big head, which came from an elephant. Ganesha's form screams «integration is possible». Like in a story. When I surrender to a story, the real and unreal work hand in hand. Story is so small and so big. Ganesha is that oxymoron, too. And then there is his really cool head.

For Jennie and Jan - Greek meanders and an invocation to the muse

Elinor Benjamin - Dartmouth, NS

The hardest part of doing the quilt square is getting inspired. When I first received the square for this year's quilt, the StorySave project was set to honour Jennie Frost. Naturally, my thoughts went immediately to things Classical, and I had recently taken courses on Homer and Virgil. I had also been to Ottawa for the lustrous production of "The Odyssey" at the NAC Second Stage and was still much "enthused", literally, filled with «divinities» - or so I hoped. When the special Jan Andrews project was announced, it was clear that I had to go Greek or go home.

Perhaps it might be possible to reproduce a Greek Vase painting of the famous chariot race from the story Hippodamea and Pelops, one of Jennie's favourite's. Closer investigation of the said vase painting revealed too many horses legs and too many reins - details simply too persnickety to be re-created in fabric. 'Twas bad enough that I decided to essay a Grecian key or "meander" pattern around the edge. Meanders meander more easily with pen and ruler than fabric. Thank goodness, a classics scholar friend assured me that meanders need not be perfect, for the results were less than geometric.

Now for the design in the middle. Of course! Why not adapt Homer's invocation to the muse. As storytellers, don't we all rely upon the muse to speak to us. With a semester of Greek behind me, I could figure that out - and besides everything is on the internet now anyway. Add a lyre and we had it.

RED

Pearl-Ann Gooding - Wainwright, AB

This block was inspired by my love of the tale, Little Red Riding Hood. I had a chance to really explore the story deeply a few years ago when I worked on a Faerie Tale Project with several other Edmonton tellers. The layers and revelations that I gleaned from the tale from the many, many versions that I read from poems, modern children's stories, old faerie tales, novelettes, novels, essays and studies on the tale made me love the story even more. I was thrilled to have the opportunity to write my own version of who and what I felt was important while keeping to the true sense of the oldest versions that I found.

I applique`d this block with Red in her infamous cloak and hood traveling through the wood and the ominous wolf paw print stamping its mark to know that she has entered into his territory.

I hope that when the block is looked at, that interest might be peaked in the tale and YOU will go and pick up a version … preferably one of the old versions to get a feel for what the story really is.

I was very proud to be the artistic director of a Faerie Tale CD of the Old Tales told the way they were MEANT to be heard called Undaunted Enchantments. My version of Red is on that CD.

Tribute to Jan Andrews: friend, mentor, rock climber

Ann Nagy - Ottawa, ON

Jan has met many challenges in her life and achieved much.
She is an accomplished storyteller.
As an artistic director she has earned the respect of storytellers for her enthusiastic and positive approach.
She is a longtime member of the Ottawa Storytellers and a founder of Storytellers of Canada / Conteurs du Canada.
She is the initiator of StorySave, the project supported by the sale of this quilt. At SC/CC conferences, Jan is the one who constantly reminds us of the history and heritage of our organization.
She is a mother, and partner. She is funny, and lively, and passionate.
She is a Silly Old Person.
Here's to you Jan! And thank you.

Deux Amies

Sylvi Belleau & Nicole Filliatrault - Montreal, QC

Deux femmes, une rencontre, des vues communes,
Un pied de chaque côté de l'Atlantique,
Une amitié est née
Après avoir parcouru côte à côte les sentiers de la danse, des mots et du théâtre
Une complicité se développe entre elles lors de la maîtrise en art dramatique
Elles cheminent à travers les méandres leurs démarches artistiques
Une amitié grandit
Les deux amies parcourent les mêmes sentiers
Au détour du chemin, une surprise, un clin d'œil de la vie
Le conte qui leur fait découvrir les profondeurs des bijoux cachés
de la littérature orale et des récits de vie
L'amitié s'enracine
Elles poursuivent leur marche sur les sentiers de la parole,
En solo, ensemble ou en compagnie des Arbraconteurs
Le coup de main n'a plus jamais cessé
Pour leur plus grand plaisir
Et pour celui des petites ou grandes oreilles qui les écoutent
L'amitié porte fruit

Once upon a time, two paths crossed one another…

This is a story about lasting friendship, shared views and experiences that lead two women from theatre to storytelling, in parallel or together, in solo or with Les Arbraconteurs, a collective of storytellers. This is the story of friendship that sprouts, grows, and bears fruit.

Three Apples Fell

Pearl-Ann Gooding - Wainwright, AB

Every year I have done a block with some form of this fabulous story opening. 'Three Apples Fell from heaven, one for the story, one for the storyteller and one for the storylistener. –and then again as a closing- Three Apples Fell from heaven, one for the storyteller, one for the storylistener and one for the one who passed it on.'

My husband is Greek and in many of his childhood storybooks, this saying begins and ends the stories. I loved it and adopted as part of my storytelling early in my career. I love the fact, that if you know the saying and most storytellers do, that you don't even have to have a word, you just need three apples, or a falling apple [and you just assume that 2 more are coming], or even a tree with a blush of red somewhere in it and already the beginning of the story has started for you.

I am a quilter at heart [I didn't fall from the tree as my mother is an avid quilter and I learned to love the design and stitching working at her side.

My dear friend, Mary Gavan, is always sending me thoughtful reminders, gifts, quotes or stories about quilts. This past year she sent me a book on quilts from a show that she had attended. In it was a design of quilting that I had only seen in shows but hadn't ever been shown how to do it and it did look quite difficult so I had never attempted it myself. In this book were very detailed instructions on how to draw, machine stitch detail and fabric ink to illuminate. I was so excited that I studied it for weeks for my bedtime reading and dreamed of creating something for this year's quilt. Having three apples sliding down a rainbow seemed like a perfect attempt to begin this method. I had so much fun doing it and now my block and my story will always remind me of a special friend. Enjoy!

Christine Mayr - Montreal, QC

Sorry, no story available.

Same But Different

Laura O'Connor - Edmonton, AB

As a teller, I love to tell stories involving dragons. I had the concept for the quilt square and Barbara Marquis played with my concept and created the quilt square. Western Dragons are ferocious and antagonistic; while Eastern Dragons are beautiful and heroic. Stories and Tellers are like Dragons; there are many similarities and differences between them. The same story can be told very differently by different tellers.

Barbara Marquis is a Graduate of Pastoral Psychology from St. Andrew's theological College, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.
She has worked with bereaved children and teens for ten years using her specialization of Art Therapy. She has a private practice and facilitates retreats. Using her creativity in liturgical art, she transforms the scriptures into visual montages. Barbara can be reached at bmarguis@shaw.ca.